

GOVERNMENT BY THE DEAD

A LONELY LIFE

THE CANADIAN FORUM

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GOVERNMENT BY FINANCE

WHEN the time comes for the history of the Great Depression of 1930-40 to be written it is probable that due emphasis will be given to the dominating part played by international finance in determining the economic trend of our time, and in shaping all those forces in practical politics whose role it is to carry through the administrative measures that are necessary to produce that 'financial stability' which is the aim of high finance. It is true that at all times, in a capitalist economy, the great banking institutions are able to exert considerable influence, but when conditions are 'normal' their position is that of 'prompter,' and most of their work is carried on behind the scenes. During periods of comparative prosperity the prominent financier does not court publicity, and his chief political function is to cultivate, assiduously and unobtrusively, sentiments of order, legality, and conservatism. It is only at such times as the present, when an ever-sharpening economic crisis threatens the whole financial structure, that the international banker is obliged to leave his golden tower and publicly dictate policies to the politician. During the past year, first in one country and then in another, the banker has been obliged to bring his direct influence to bear on political questions. In all the political moves which accompanied the financial crisis in Austria, in a series of similar crises in Germany, in Mr. Hoover's moratorium, in the formation of a National Government and the temporary abandonment of the gold standard in England, the fine Italian hand of the banker may be observed. Even where the banker is exclusively concerned with the conservation of a sound monetary policy, politics and finance are so inextricably bound up together that the financier has been compelled to achieve his ends by and through political agencies.

BANKING POLICY

IN any evaluation of banking policy it is necessary to discriminate between the ordinary, domestic, day-to-day practice of banking and the operation of finance on its higher plane. In so far as regular routine business is concerned, modern banking is highly efficient and plays a

very necessary part in any national economy. The Canadian banking system is particularly well suited to our existing social order, it is generally well-managed and reliable, and it has been sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of a growing country which is rapidly changing from a predominantly agricultural to an industrial community. When Mr. Bernard Shaw, a few weeks ago, said that 'the bankers are always wrong,' he was not referring to their handling of his own personal bank account. What he was thinking of was the manipulation of credit by the heads of the great financial houses and its effect upon current political economy. Mr. Shaw believes, with most radical economists, that the purpose of currency is to furnish a medium for the exchange of goods, and that a really effective banking system should distribute currency and credit in a manner that would provide for the distribution of the maximum amount of goods that could be produced by industry at any time. Instead of which we have a surplus of goods, or a shortage of the medium of exchange—whichever way you care to look at it. But this is a rather simple and unsophisticated view to take of the question. In a competitive society the banker is primarily a man of business whose first duty to himself and to his shareholders is to produce a profit on the commodity in which he deals—money, and it is absurd to expect him to sacrifice his legitimate interests on the altar of public welfare. Perhaps the most severe criticism that could be made of our present system is that the interests of the individual so seldom coincide with the interests of society as a whole.

CANADA AND THE GOLD STANDARD

AS a Canadian economist put it the other day, there are still three great powers who adhere to the gold standard,—the United States, France, and Mr. R. B. Bennett. The almost infinite gullibility of the Canadian people was never better illustrated than by the serene assurance with which our Conservative papers repeated the Prime Minister's statement of Canada's determination to remain on the gold standard and in the same breath announced that our dollar was at ten per cent. discount in New York. A country whose

currency cannot be exchanged at its par value in the money markets of the world may possess all the other virtues; but it is certainly not on the gold standard, if that be a virtue in these days. To make our Canadian situation still more charming, Mr. Stevens came to Toronto and delivered a speech to the Empire Club suggesting the advisability of restoring silver to its old position as a basis for currency. Silver advocates are, of course, just one species of inflationist. Inflation may be a good thing or a bad thing, but a government which prates of its adherence to orthodox nineteenth century gold should be careful not to indulge in inflationist speeches. They manage these things better in England. There the 'National' government saved the English pound in a perfectly produced melodrama and three weeks later abandoned the pound to its fate, and on both occasions succeeded in convincing the gullible that they were saving the country. As Lord Melbourne once informed his colleagues, the secret of the Cabinet system is that it doesn't matter what you say but you must all say the same thing at the same time. Mr. Bennett's cabinet evidently needs some education either in the elementary principles of the gold standard or in that great principle of cabinet solidarity which has made old England what she is.

VICE-REGAL RECORDS

AFTER his strenuous and fatiguing campaign against the menace of free speech and free assembly, ex-General D. C. Draper, Toronto Chief of Police, was in need of a well-earned holiday, and the many friends and admirers of this staunch defender of law and order were glad this autumn to see him off on a jaunt to Paris, there to attend the International Conference of Police Chiefs. He will find the atmosphere of Paris most congenial, for in the chair of Prefect of Police in the French capital sits Jean Chiappe, a perfect Corsican double of Toronto's 'scourge of the Reds.' Like Chief Draper, Chiappe is a model of efficiency, and, like him, his favourite hobby is clubbing radicals and breaking up meetings. In June of this year, when Foreign Minister Briand returned from Geneva to receive an ovation at the hands of the people of Paris, Monsieur Chiappe outdid all his past performances when his agents beat and kicked and arrested hundreds of demonstrators guilty of shouting *Vive la Paix*. This was a notable performance, but Chief Draper is evidently not going to let himself be outdone by any frog-eating foreigner. In a speech delivered to the assembled police chiefs, and widely broadcast in the Canadian press, Chief Draper insists, as a measure of public safety, that all immigrants and even 'visitors' coming into a country should be provided with finger prints and their local police record. This is an original scheme indeed and should make travel interesting. And think of the picturesque ceremony that can be devised when Lord Bessborough's successor lands at Halifax and solemnly hands over his vice-regal finger prints and police record before taking the oath of office.

BASELESS FABRIC OF A DREAM

IT does not take a prophet to predict that, by the time these words appear, the press of Canada will be wallowing in the midst of one of its periodic and unique demonstrations over Imperial affairs. Already our more devoted journals are whooping it up for the so-called National government, on the basis of Mr. Baldwin's parrot-like pronouncements on Protection. The persistence of the delusion that Canada has something to hope from a Tory triumph on this basis is only one example of that complete refusal to face facts so characteristic of our whole public attitude. One could almost welcome a Conservative victory in England if it would end the baseless cant which our own Conservatives continue to spout on the subject of Empire trade. For the result would assuredly be a death-blow to these fond illusions. In the first place, it is by no means certain that a victory for the National government would result in a definitely protective policy. In the second place, even if the Tories succeed in bludgeoning their allies into acceptance, it is quite certain that protection will not include a tariff on food. And without this particular duty, no benefit can accrue to Canada; indeed, her last state might well be worse than her first. Many of the people in England have been hit by the recent measures of economy. All of them are going to be affected as the drop in sterling becomes reflected in rising prices. The idea that any government is going blindly to aggravate the situation by a tariff, which will raise the price of necessities still further, could only occur to minds of the most inexorable density. And the idea that Britain will generously sacrifice her own obvious advantage for the sake of a Dominion which, in the form of Mr. Bennett's anti-dumping regulations, proceeded to tramp all over her when she was down, is one before which all words pale into inadequacy.

UNVIRTUOUS JESTS

AN interesting problem arises from an item in the latest schedule of tariffs on magazines. Included in the list is a publication called *Ballyhoo*. This is an innocuous monthly of alleged humor in the manner of *Life* and *Judge*. But its real claim to distinction is that it carries no paid advertising. Instead, it sprinkles its pages with burlesques of well-known national advertisements—a salutary proceeding which ought surely to be welcomed by those sturdy patriots who dislike American sales technique. Yet this publication has been loaded with the full prohibitive tariff of fifteen cents a copy. Why this should be the case under a tariff whose guiding principle, if any, is supposed to be the amount of advertising matter in any given publication, leaves one wondering. Three possibilities present themselves. The government may believe, in spite of the denials of the publishers, that the supposedly humorous advertisements are in reality being paid for. The government may believe—as the publishers hope—that they will in some cases result in paid advertising, and therefore have decided to clap on a duty at once. Or the government, with a curious

lack of humour, may simply have failed to recognize the burlesques as such, and have solemnly measured the space they occupy as though it were serious advertising matter. The reader may take his choice. For our own part, the record and personnel of the Government at Ottawa makes decision practically instantaneous.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

EVER since the Privy Council awarded Labrador to Newfoundland without taking time to read the enormous Canadian brief on the subject there has been talk of our buying back the lost territory. Why should we do anything so foolish? The only value of the Labrador hinterland is in its pulp-wood and water-power. If Labrador is incorporated in the Dominion it will necessarily become part of the Province of Quebec, and these natural resources will in due course be given away to Sir Herbert Holt. If it remains part of Newfoundland the resources will no doubt also ultimately fall into the hands of the inevitable Sir Herbert. The only difference is that in the one case the incidental pickings in the shape of campaign funds and such things will go to the politicians of St. John's and in the other case to the politicians of Quebec. Why should the taxpayers of Canada spend millions to effect so small a result? What with the Montreal Bridge and the Beauharnois Canal, the Quebec politicians must be about the only group in the country who are not feeling the pinch of the present depression.

HIGHWAY ADVERTISING

IT is with pleasure, although with some pessimism, that we note that the American Institute of Park Executives (Canada included) has set its face against the destruction of beauty along the highways. 'Obnoxious forms of advertising and unsightly roadside developments' are the main objects of the Institute's offensive, and there are few who will not wish them luck. At present in Canada, and most particularly in southern Ontario, as soon as a country road has been 'improved' it ceases to be worth using except as a means of transportation. Not only does the widening, straightening, levelling, and paving destroy much of its natural beauty, but it becomes at once lined with an assortment of giant posters, exasperatingly dramatic signs, yellow and red hot-dog stands, and slovenly garages. Of course wayside eating-places and service stations and indications where to find a night's lodging, fresh eggs, or vegetables are necessities. But they could be made attractive, and nothing can be said for hundred-foot billboards, signs of the 'Stop! Turn-here-for-eats!' variety, or for violent paint-work and repulsive litter. The cure is in our own hands. Public opinion can prevent engineering destructiveness if we are willing to pay a fraction more for our roads; legislation can forbid all but locally-significant advertising if we will oppose the vested interests; and public choice can drive from business the ugly, the sluttish, and the vulgar if we have the taste and patience to discriminate—

three very large 'ifs' in the Canada of today, but now is the time to prepare for next year's motor season.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

MR. JACK MINER does not always speak words of wisdom on the subject of 'conservation,' but he recently made a statement concerning the International Migratory Bird Treaty which calls for the support of every disinterested person in the United States and Canada. This treaty allows an open season of three and a half months for ducks and geese, a daily bag limit of twenty-five ducks and eight geese, with a further seasonal limit. With such absurd freedom to destroy, it is no wonder that the numbers of ducks and geese are rapidly diminishing. This year the season for ducks was reduced in the United States to one month, and in some Canadian provinces to a month or a month and a half, to offset the calamitous drying up of breeding sloughs in the Prairie Provinces — an inadequate step but proving that action can be taken when the necessity is realized. Mr. Miner proposes the formation of an international commission, the first consideration of which would be the birds and not the hunters. It would be composed of five members each from the Southern States, the Northern States, and Canada, or, roughly speaking, from the wintering, migrating, and breeding areas. He also recommends that the open season should be permanently reduced to one and a half months. This is the right stuff, but accomplishment will not come easily. Action may come too late to save several threatened species.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO QUARTERLY

ALL who are interested in the intellectual life in Canada will welcome *The University of Toronto Quarterly* of which the first number has just appeared. The aim of the new journal is to publish articles in the field of literature, science and philosophy which will be of interest to scholars but which will not be narrowly technical in character. Its editor, Professor G. S. Brett, in explaining its scope refers us to the 'gentleman's magazine' of our grandfathers. Current or controversial questions of politics will be avoided and thus there will be no intrusion on the field which the *Queen's Quarterly* has been cultivating so successfully in recent years. Perhaps the best way of giving an idea of the scope of the new venture is to list the table of contents of Vol. I, No. 1. The leading article is by Prof. Ernest Barker of Cambridge on 'The Problem of Spiritual Authority in England.' Then follow articles on 'Energy and Action,' by Prof. A. S. Eve of McGill; 'The Early Architecture of Ontario,' by Prof. E. R. Arthur of Toronto; 'Homeric Technique,' by Prof. E. T. Owen of Toronto; 'Ugo Foscolo and Some Englishmen,' by Prof. A. S. Noad of McGill; 'The Drift of Modern Fiction,' by Prof. Pelham Edgar of Toronto; and a poem, 'The Iceberg,' by Mr. Charles G. D. Roberts.

GOVERNMENT BY THE DEAD

NORMAN McL. ROGERS

THERE is a memorable passage in one of Edmund Burke's speeches in which the state is defined as a partnership between the dead, the living, and the yet unborn. There is more than rhetorical excellence in this description. It emphasizes the two greatest moderating influences on constitutional evolution, the inheritance of tradition which the living generation receives from those preceding it, and the idea that the living generation holds political authority in trust for those who will stand one day in their places. Few would question the salutary effect of these influences upon those who are charged with the direction of public affairs. Among Anglo-Saxon peoples they have been of conspicuous importance both in arresting revolutionary changes and in developing an unusual sense of public responsibility in those who have held high offices of state. In Great Britain, however, the acknowledgment of these obligations to the shadowy legions of the past and future has never weakened the more direct and immediate responsibility to the members of the state who happen to be bearing the burden and sharing the privilege of citizenship at any given time. Disraeli, no doubt, had a genuine reverence for that tradition of parliamentary representation which gave dominance to the rich, well-born, and able, and based the franchise on the possession of a substantial property qualification. At the same time, he had the wit to see that the opinions and institutions of the dead and dying could not be allowed to prevail against the urgent demands of a generation of Englishmen which had grown to manhood and power in the heyday of the Industrial Revolution. The wisdom of the dead was not forgotten. The institutions they had moulded to suit their time were not discarded summarily as outworn garments. It was realized, however, that the first duty of government was to the living. Tradition was reconciled with expediency. The constitution was reinvigorated by establishing a constant and sympathetic contact with the new community of workmen. Fortunately the constitution of Great Britain is so constructed that the balance between tradition and expediency can be adjusted swiftly to correspond with changes in the temper of the people or in the material conditions of their existence. Tradition has been recognized and observed as a constitutional influence. It has never been allowed to operate as a constitutional shackle.

So long as tradition is kept in its proper groove its effect on government is beneficent. But in the era of written constitutions which began with the French Revolution it has claimed a place which it does not deserve in constitutional arrangements. Its proper domain is in the sphere of influence. Unfortunately it has been given a commanding position in the field of constitutional law. To a far greater extent than we realize we are being

governed by the dead. It is as though political authority had been passed down to this generation as a limited life estate with restrictive covenants, whereas if the doctrine of popular sovereignty has any validity our exercise of political authority ought to be unfettered by any limitations which are definitely beyond our control. The consequences of this situation are of more than academic interest. For those of us who dwell in Canada they give emphasis to what is perhaps the most crucial political problem confronting us at this time. They strike at the core of the great question of social reconstruction. They expose and explain some of the most dangerous infirmities of our national life. They ought to form a common rallying-point for all those who express remorse because of the deterioration of our public life, yet content themselves with denunciation of the living and are prone to forget how much we are governed by the dead.

* * *

Some sixty years ago a group of earnest men met in the city of Quebec for the purpose of effecting a union of the provinces of British North America. Since the only form of union that was found feasible was a federal union, an important part of their task was the partition of the field of legislative authority between the Dominion and the provinces. In the final result a division of powers was proposed which appeared to give to the Dominion an effective control over the bulk of those matters which were of general concern, but left to the provinces a region of legislative authority called 'property and civil rights' which has proved to be an encompassing territory embracing within its ample boundaries almost the entire field of industrial and social relations. To say that this result was foreseen and intended by the members of the Quebec and London Conferences would be a gross libel on their intelligence. The great problems of social and economic development had not yet emerged in Canada. We were still, in the main, an aggregation of agricultural communities. The Industrial Revolution had scarcely touched our shores. Trade Unions were practically unknown. The attitude of government towards questions of industrial organization, public health, and social welfare, was still dominated by the maxims of *laissez-faire*. If the architects of the British North America Act had any definite views regarding the national importance of these interests, they were obsessed even more by what they regarded as the inescapable barriers of distance which separated one community from another and rendered it advisable to leave a wide scope for decentralized effort by governmental agencies in the several provinces. And so it happened that when the British North America Act came into operation, the distribution of powers was adapted to the needs of the immediate present, but as time has since proved,

was utterly unsuited to the conditions which were to develop with the rapid growth of industrial life and the expansion of facilities for transportation and communication on a national scale.

This arrangement of 1867 still stands in its original position. If anything it is worse than might have been predicted at the time it was made, owing to the strict interpretation given to the British North America Act by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Already there have been significant effects upon our political and economic development, but the probable future effects are even more disquieting from a national standpoint. Aside from the maintenance of certain essential national services like the post-office, war pensions, banking and currency, national defence, etc., almost the entire region of social service and industrial relations belongs to or is claimed by the provinces. The Dominion has become very largely an agency for the collection and expenditure of public money and the dispensing of largesse in the form of tariff protection to hungry industries. It is denied access to almost all the avenues of service in which government is brought into intimate touch with the needs of the people. It can offer no effective contribution to the solution of economic and social problems which are now challenging the earnest consideration of statesmen in every country of the world. If it attempts to meet the problem of strikes in public utilities by compulsory investigation of the issues at stake, it is confronted with a caveat from the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. If it accepts an international obligation for the inauguration of the eight-hour day, it is informed by its law-officers that its control of working hours does not extend beyond its own employees or those engaged in the performance of government contracts. If it evinces an interest in unemployment insurance it is confronted with precedents which state that this subject falls within the competence of the provincial legislatures. If it betrays a tardy interest in old-age pensions, it is told by its law-officers that it can only pass permissive legislation, leaving administration in the hands of the provinces. The entire field of education lies beyond its purview. Immigration and agriculture evoke only a divided interest. They are subject to a concurrent jurisdiction with the provinces. If it were not for the taxing power, including the regulation of the tariff, the national government (if one is entitled to apply such a term to such a government) would have less effective control over social progress than the general conference of the United Church of Canada. If it be thought that this is too strong a statement, it is only necessary to consider the legislation actually passed by the Dominion Parliament in the midst of what is possibly the gravest economic crisis the world has known. If one excepts the statutes providing for donations of public money for provincial objects, how much of the remainder bears any close relationship to the vital interests and aspirations of the Canadian people? Whatever energy the Dominion may display in time of war, it has become abundantly

clear that it is ill-equipped to deal by national decision with those urgent problems which have been brought into the very foreground of national interest as a result of economic developments which have taken place since the passage of the British North America Act.

So long as the living generation has it readily in its power to alter constitutional arrangements in accordance with the changing needs of the community, government by the dead will not be abused. But when, as sometimes happens, the forces of extreme conservatism attempt to give an irrevocable character to laws and institutions which have long outlived their usefulness and are not in the nature of guarantees to minorities, it is high time to re-assert the claims of the living against the dead. No one who has followed recent events in Canada can fail to realize that we are rapidly approaching such a crisis in this country. For some time past there has been a determined effort to give an almost perpetual effect to the distribution of powers between the Dominion and the provinces which was arranged at the Quebec and London Conferences. Those who support this view take the position that, in the absence of any specific procedure of amendment, the British North America Act must be regarded as a treaty between the Dominion and the provinces which can only be altered by the unanimous consent of the contracting parties. This means, in effect, that a single province, if it so willed, could prevent any alteration of the relations between the Dominion and the provinces as laid down by the British North America Act of 1867. In practice it would give power to a majority of the representatives in any provincial legislature to prevent the adoption of a constitutional amendment which was desired by the rest of the Dominion. The motive of the dissentient province would be immaterial. Under the treaty or compact theory of the Constitution its legal right of veto could not be challenged. It must be evident to any thoughtful person that such a method of constitutional amendment would be a fantastic aberration from the principles of popular government. Yet this view has received support in high places, and there is a serious danger that the Dominion Government may be stampeded into a formal or tacit acceptance of an untenable theory through fear of reviving the ancient controversy over provincial rights. Perhaps it would not be quite accurate to describe this as government by the dead. It would be more correct to term it an alliance of a living minority with the shades of the Fathers of Confederation for the purpose of maintaining the *status quo* and of arresting social progress on a national scale.

How then can we escape from this law of constitutional mortmain? How can this generation of Canadians make its will prevail in matters of national interest? And is it really important that there should be a redistribution of powers between the Dominion and the provinces? The last of these questions cannot be answered in detail without careful investigation and due regard to the advantages of decentralized administration in

certain fields of social legislation. One consideration is paramount, however, and cannot be emphasized too strongly. The most urgent problems confronting government in the period that lies ahead will be related to social and economic reconstruction. The world is in process of transformation. European nations are in the vanguard of the movement, but Canada cannot escape its influence. More and more the great subjects of national concern will be social and economic in character. They will call for large-scale state planning. They will require a concentration of initiative in a unified command. They cannot be met successfully by the pedestrian methods of conference with which the Dominion Government is now attempting to deal with the unemployment crisis. If anything were necessary to prove the inefficiency of nine different controls of economic and social questions, that need has been supplied by the evidence of delay and ineptitude already encountered in relation to the measures of relief which were enacted at the recent session of Parliament. Whatever may be said for the advantages of decentralized administration, it has become clear that if problems of this magnitude are to be met successfully the power of legislative decision and executive supervision must be concentrated at the national capital. Social and economic questions are not exclusively provincial, whatever the Constitution and the Courts may assert. They are national in their incidence and are becoming more so with every improvement in transportation and communication. If they are to be dealt with as national questions, the relationship between employer and employee must be brought under the jurisdiction of the Dominion, and with it the subject of social insurance for old age and unemployment. Factory legislation ought also to be under the potential control of the Dominion and with it the effective power to regulate production and distribution when that need becomes apparent. It will not be necessary to transfer these or other subjects to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Dominion. It is enough to give the Dominion a concurrent authority which will enable it at its discretion to leave a portion of the field to the provinces or to occupy it by its paramount authority whenever such action should be deemed advisable. One of the greatest faults of the distribution of powers in the British North America Act lies in the general adherence to the principle of exclusive jurisdiction. This formula has been modified in the more recent federal constitutions adopted in Germany and Austria. The true desideratum is elasticity instead of rigidity of function. The fundamental principle of federalism ought to be cooperation, and the ends of cooperation can be obtained most successfully by widening the field of concurrent jurisdiction with the provinces. The national government must be given the power to adapt itself to new situations as they arise.

Assuming that this goal is desirable, how is it to be attained? The answer is that it can never be attained so long as we consent to be governed by the dead. The first objective must be the adop-

tion of a procedure of constitutional amendment in Canada which will afford the maximum of flexibility compatible with a reasonable protection to minorities which now enjoy definite constitutional guarantees. Government is our servant—not our master. The sentiment of national unity must be cultivated and appealed to with the definite object of reaching this goal through the cooperation of the Dominion Parliament and the provincial legislatures. The reality of national self-government must not be lost through an exaggerated emphasis on provincial rights. Sometimes we are in danger of forgetting that the Dominion Parliament and the provincial legislatures are equally the servants of the Canadian people. The compact theory of Confederation must be rejected once and for all. A Constitutional Convention may then be summoned to reconsider the distribution of legislative and taxing powers in the light of the problems and circumstances of the present century, and to propose amendments which will give authority to the national government to deal effectively with social and industrial relations in accordance with the changing needs and opinions of the community. In this way alone can we escape from our present servitude to the dead.

* * *

The continuance of the present situation is a challenge to the forces of progress throughout the Dominion. In particular it is a challenge to Liberalism and Labour, as well as an opportunity for these political groups to close their ranks and go forward in a crusade which is vital to their continued leadership in federal politics. The history of Canadian Liberalism is interwoven with the movement for constitutional self-government. This has been its strength in past years. In this crusade it was close to the pulse of the people, and its objectives were worthy of the best effort of men of high attainments. Now that the last ramparts have been scaled in the struggle for constitutional freedom, National Liberalism finds itself on a desolate plain with only the light of its former campfires to guide it on its future way. Its commanders do not lack capacity or goodwill, but the army needs new objectives if it is to maintain its morale of achievement. At present it finds to its dismay that the battle of social reform, a struggle so congenial to its spirit, is being waged elsewhere. And what shall be said of the Labour group in the Dominion Parliament? No unprejudiced person can doubt the sincerity or under-rate the ability of its members. But what can it do to advance the cause of labour in Canada apart from supporting highly questionable grants from the Dominion Treasury for purposes which the British North America Act has placed under the control of the provincial legislatures? It is difficult to resist the conclusion that under the present distribution of powers there is little scope for a Labour Party in the Dominion Parliament. It is a voice crying in the wilderness. It can do little to promote the programme of social amelioration in which its members believe. At times its spokesmen betray a cynicism which is born of a consciousness of the futility of their efforts in the

direction of social reconstruction. Experience has shown them that the field of service for labour is not at Ottawa, but like the open fields of a medieval manor is dispersed among the nine capitals of the provinces.

For Liberalism and for Labour there is the same problem and the same solution. The path of social reform is broad enough for both. But the path cannot be taken until the constitutional barrier is cleared away.



THE Beauharnois scandal has raised two main problems in our national politics. One concerns the influence which wealthy corporations, by their campaign funds, exercise over the activities of political parties. The other centres about the policy which ought to be pursued in the development and control of our great strategic natural resources and public services. Evidently the main effect of Mr. Bennett's handling of the scandal is to discourage any further ventilation of either of these questions. And evidently, if that is his intention, he will be enthusiastically supported by both the old parties.

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THE question of party campaign funds is dealt with in the October 15 number of *McLean's Magazine* in an article by Professor R. A. MacKay of Dalhousie which should be read by everyone. 'Canada's National Magazine' usually confines its discussion of our national problems to ridiculous personal puffs of politicians in office or of incitements to ill-will against our American neighbours. It is refreshing to find it giving space for a change to something better than pot-boilers dashed off by professional or semi-professional journalists in their spare time. Professor MacKay points out that our laws regulating campaign expenditures are entirely antiquated—the basic law is the Dominion Elections Act of 1874 which followed the English Act of 1854—because they deal only with the expenditures of the individual candidate and his agent, and ignore the existence of the great central party funds. They are inadequate to deal even with the individual candidate and, such as they are, they are not enforced. He advocates a much greater measure of compulsory publicity about the origin and disposal of the central funds, including a proper audit and a full report for each constituency to Parliament by the Chief Electoral Officer. 'It must, of course, be recognized that in the last analysis electoral laws, like other laws, depend for their enforcement on alert public opinion. But, while we must beware of relying too much on law and not enough on opinion, we can no more depend for electoral purity on opinion alone than we can for the prevention of crime.' Incidentally he points out how much more effectively the Ameri-

cans have dealt with this question than we have.

In the long run, however, Professor MacKay agrees that the only real assurance against the domination of politics by big monied interests lies in the willingness of the humble individual party member to support his party with financial contributions. Here our independent groups have shown the way in Canada; but one's imagination balks at the thought of Grit and Tory voters forking out two campaign funds of from one to two million dollars every four years, not to mention what they would have to provide for provincial elections. Still, if they will not do so, the alternative is clear. 'The immediate problem is to assure that those who pay the party piper shall be made known. Some day perhaps the rank and file of the party may learn that it is to their advantage to pay the piper themselves. Then only will they be certain that they and no others call the tune.'

* * *

THIS question of campaign funds has an even more immediate bearing than is provided by the Beauharnois case. When Great Britain went off the gold standard the indecent haste of our government in shutting out British imports by its special Orders-in-Council raised protests even from some Conservative journals. The imports from Britain which would be most favoured by the devaluation of the pound are, of course, textiles. Between August, 1930, and August, 1931, while grains declined in price in Canada by 41%, livestock by 19%, and dairy products by 21%, textiles declined by only 7%. According to the *Manitoba Free Press*, it is generally believed in Ottawa that the Canadian textile industry contributed half a million to the Conservative war chest in the last election. It at least does not seem to have shared Mr. Bennett's faith in the Grace of God as a solvent of its share of the world's troubles.

* * *

ACCORDING to rumour the net result of all our excitement over Beauharnois is that the development is to be added to the string of Holt enterprises. As Armistice season comes round each November and the peoples of the world pause to reflect on what they fought each other for, it becomes ever clearer in Canada that, whatever we may have imagined at the time, the ultimate purpose of our participation in the great struggle was to make Canada safe for Sir Herbert Holt. Evidently since the War the movement for public ownership and control of great strategic services has steadily lost ground. It seems impossible to mobilize public ownership opinion effectively. There is no leadership for it, and it is only occasionally when some particularly gross bit of private propaganda is engineered by the tireless interests who work for the C.P.R. that public feeling is momentarily aroused and we get a hint of how widespread the belief in public ownership still is. In general, the real effect of our complacent pride in what we have accomplished in the C.N.R. and the Ontario Hydro has been to lull us into a false sense of security.

For the fact is that what happens in our post-

war generation will be decisive for the future of democracy in our country. If we do not head off these gigantic private enterprises now by appropriating to public control what remains of our hydro-electric power sites we shall soon be faced, like the United States, with an intricate network of private concerns who have acquired a practical monopoly in the development and distribution of electric power. In practically all our provinces sites are being seized by private companies because the provincial governments profess themselves too poor to proceed with the development; and the capital which the provinces cannot raise is produced with uncanny success by private entrepreneurs who eliminate all risk for their shareholders by making profitable contracts for the delivery of power with the very provinces who could not afford the risk themselves. What makes the situation more threatening is that in some of the provinces the concerns who have been engaged in this merry game are subsidiaries of the great American electric power octopus. And American experience has shown that the inextricable maze of holding companies which modern finance has created in order to hide its profits makes the task of regulating rates in the interest of the consumer practically impossible.

Our railway situation is equally threatening. Just when it looked as if the C.P.R. had overplayed its hand and the government had to put a stop to the propaganda which some of its minor supporters were carrying on in the House last session, there has been a renewed outburst of the attack on the national lines. This time we are hearing suggestions of amalgamation with a view to saving the government its annual deficit on the C.N.R. The only amalgamation which is tolerable will be one in which the public concern absorbs the private one. Sooner or later we shall be forced into such a step, not for financial reasons but to emancipate ourselves from the constant bombardment of C.P.R. news and propaganda to which we are subjected at present.

But where is the leadership for a public ownership campaign in this country to come from? Even among our Western progressives enthusiasm on this subject seems to have become slightly academic. In Ontario the general apathy shows that the appearance of Beck in the last generation was a lucky accident. And accidents no longer happen in our present well-regulated parties. We shall need a succession of Beauharnois incidents before the public can be properly awakened, and by that time it will be too late.

F. H. U.



VICTORY

(Guns pass the infantry on the highroad between Valenciennes, France, and Mons, Belgium, November, 1918).

Up through the cold mist the guns came behind us at morning,
We were glad we were there to see;
Rolling wheels to the line that had broken before us,
And eastward they hurried, and we.

We stood aside. The riders sat calm in their saddles,
Chains rattled, wheels thudded into the holes.
We stood ankle-deep in mud, and stared, and a sudden
New fire burned up in our souls.

This was reprieve. Oh, God, the lifetime of filth and stagnation!
Not this winter would bind us to madness in mire.
Vermin, and rotting feet, and the loathsome stench where a battle
Has ended in death on the wire—

All bound for oblivion under the gun-wheels free-rolling!
But never a whisper of cheer
Rose from our ranks. Our eyes were so grim and so steady,
And, watching, to us it was clear:

Every stone that these swift-rolling wheels pounded over,
Was laid down on the bones of a man;
Even the very road-filth that squelched and oozed from beneath them
More than tinged with blood as it ran.

So they passed. We shouldered our packs, slung rifles, each man no more than a beast,
Sullenly lowered our heads, fell in behind, and marched away to the east.

F. H. Ross

NOVEMBER ELEVENTH

In the Playground of America.

Can we remember why we said they went,
Or guess, who opened first our puppy-eyes
On a new world all dewy, all hope-spent,
All over-innocent, and all over-wise?
What have we made of that they gave us then,
'Our blood-born Nation, got in shambled Flanders'?

A Tourist Trade. We turn our fellow-men
Into a trade, and praise ourselves for panders.
This is our freedom: we are free to fawn
And cheat and cower, and shape our living's sort
To start and tremble at our buyer's yawn,
And breed ourselves as beasts for others' sport.
That we might live, and pinch our children's pride
To cringe and cadge for pennies, these men died.

L. A. M.

FREEDOM AND JUSTICE

By HARRY SANDERS

'As we have freedom, so have we justice. It is not just or right that now, or at any other time, we should permit, by word or deed, such action as may tend to unsettle confidence in the institutions and customs under which we live.'

THESE words form part of what Toronto's *Mail and Empire* calls one of the 'most deliberately phrased and powerfully expressed speeches' uttered by the Prime Minister of Canada during the session.

It may be true, but it is scarcely complimentary to say so. Surely no intelligent person would deliberately say that because we have freedom it is not just that we should be permitted to question it.

The very freedom we possess was won by persons whose confidence in the institutions and customs under which they lived had become unsettled. Where would 'the institutions and customs under which we live' be today, if people had never lost confidence in those under which they lived. King John was very angry with those of his day who were not satisfied; King Charles the First would have cordially agreed with Mr. Bennett, and King James the Second did what he could to prevent action tending to unsettle confidence in the institution of absolute monarchy (for which, indeed, he claimed Divine Authority). Yet Magna Carta and its implications, the supremacy of Parliament, and the Twelfth of July are institutions and customs which Mr. Bennett would, no doubt, include among those he had in mind.

History is full of examples of rulers who tried to maintain confidence in the institutions and customs under which they lived by declaring that it was unjust to permit their excellence to be questioned. About eighteen hundred years ago Pliny the Younger wrote to the Emperor Trajan reporting the methods adopted by him when certain people, who had lost confidence in the institutions and customs of their day, were brought before him. 'I asked them,' he says, 'whether they were Christians; if they pleaded guilty I interrogated them a second and a third time with a menace of capital punishment. In case of obstinate perseverance I ordered them to be executed. For of this I had no doubt, whatever was the nature of their religion, that stubbornness and inflexible obstinacy ought to be punished.'

He goes on to report the success of his methods. 'The contagion of the superstition has spread not only through cities, but even villages and the country. Not that I think it impossible to check and correct it. The success of my endeavours hitherto forbids such desponding thoughts; for the temples, once almost desolate, begin to be frequented; and the sacred solemnities, which had long been intermitted, are now attended afresh; and the sacrificial victims are now brought up everywhere, which once could scarcely find a purchaser.'

Mr. Bennett would no doubt applaud Pliny's methods, and point, with gratification, to the success which attended them — though his confidence in the institutions and customs which Pliny was attempting to uphold is probably nil.

Fear of doubt generally implies fear that some reason for the doubt exists. Tell a young man who has fallen in love that there is a doubt whether the young lady is all his fancy paints her and he will laugh at you—or knock you down, according to his temperament—but:—

One who, on a lonesome road, doth walk in fear and dread;
And, having once looked round, walks on, nor durst turn
more his head,
Because he knows a frightful fiend doth close behind him
tread,

is apt to bolster up his courage by telling himself that he isn't frightened, and doesn't believe in ghosts.

Now if you do hear a stealthy footstep outside your window at night it is sound policy to try and discover the cause, and, if you find that it is really water dripping from a defective eaves-trough, only a fool would put up an umbrella to stop the dripping. A wise man would overhaul his eaves-trough.

So with this spectre of 'Communism' which is frightening us all just now, and for the exorcism of which the Prime Minister is desiring such drastic powers. The umbrella is no good; it has been tried over and over again—and revolution after revolution has proved its futility.

The only wise course is to examine all the facts; to try and find out the causes which have led to the walking of this ghost, and to see if, by removing the cause, we can do away with the effect.

So far as can be judged the fear amounts to this—that a number of people with dirty faces will suddenly confront us with weapons of precision in their hands; will murder us and steal our effects, after which there will be a wild orgy of eating and drinking until everything is used up, after which, it is presumed, the murderers will starve to death—a poetic justice in no way to be deplored.

Now, in the first place, this is not Communism. Communism has been described by Bernard Shaw as 'a highly respectable way of sharing our wealth, sanctioned and practised by the apostles, and an indispensable part of our daily life and civilization.' Every time a resident in our cities turns on the tap over the kitchen sink he practises Communism, so that, far from being something to be afraid of, a man would be regarded as a dangerous revolutionary who advocated going back to the primitive system of private wells. Communism of some kind we must have. The only question is 'How much?' and on this opinions differ.

Now to advocate the extension of the Communism we already have to things which are at

present held individually may conceivably be a mistake, but to say that, because such advocacy tends to unsettle confidence in the institutions and customs under which we live, it is unjust to permit it, is to condemn freedom of thought, and all the progress that has resulted from it. When Mr. Bennett was making speeches tending to unsettle our confidence in a custom we had observed for some years of having our laws made by men professing what are known as Liberal opinions; he would have considered it monstrously unjust not to be permitted to do so. It has been suggested that one good custom may corrupt the world; lack of confidence in an institution or custom is not, therefore, a thing which it is unjust to permit, and Mr. Bennett's speech was not as deliberately phrased as the *Mail and Empire* thought.

Of course it will be urged that he didn't mean that. What he was opposing was the advocacy of force. Quite so. The dirty-faced men are still waiting round the corner with their machine guns. We naturally object to them. Every revolution has been strongly objected to—until it was successful. But you can't stop them with umbrellas. Why are they there? Of course no revolution is thought of unless a number of people are discontented. If, then, our dirty-faced men are really thinking of a revolution they must be discontented. Why?

Well, in the first place, it has been one of the 'customs under which we live' to encourage the entry into this country of many people raised in Central Europe. We did this to provide our shipping companies and railways with plenty of passengers. Of course we said that we were developing our resources, but we took no pains to consider the habits or modes of thought of these people, or whether they would fit into our scheme of things. If they could pay their fares, were healthy, and had a trifle to spend we advertised for them—and, what was worse, took no steps to prevent unscrupulous passenger agents in Europe from telling them anything they liked about conditions in this country. Next we have, owing to the institutions and customs under which we live, a condition of affairs resulting in numbers of people having to go without the necessities of life—while a few could not use all they are able to buy. Our University Departments of Commerce and Finance are able neither to explain satisfactorily the causes of this state of affairs, nor to suggest a remedy for it.

Finally we have, in Europe, a society of extreme Communists, anxious, it is said, to see Communism in everything established throughout the world, and not particular as to the means to be used to achieve this end.

What are we going to do about it? It is stupid to say that a belief in Communism is wicked and criminal. Pliny thought a belief in Christianity was wicked and criminal, and persuaded himself he was stamping it out. 'The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church,' and to put men in gaol merely for professing Communism—or even to forbid them to hold meetings for the purpose of advocating their ideas—is to fill our social fire-

hydrants with gasoline. Let them talk. If they talk rubbish, refute them, but if they have a grain of sense in the rubbish, for pity's sake let us seize on it to try and hasten the day when no honest man, honestly wanting to earn his living, shall be told that he can't, and that there is no help for it.

AND YET . . .

Curs'd am I with the inability
To forget you are a woman.
I do not love you, and yet . . .

I want to taste those lips of yours, red and round;
I want to spread your golden wavy hair
Over blue cushions and make pools of gold with it;
I want to crush your heavy breasts unto me
And see your pretty face
Wince with pain-pleasure, as you learn I am your
master;

I want to hear your throat make tiny sounds
Like birds without a nest;
I want to prove that nights are not for sleep alone
And teach you what strange longings
Lonely moons may breed;
I want to see your ruffled eye-brows
Above two sleepy eyes
And watch your half-seen legs
Move back and forth beneath pyjama-things.

I do not love you and withal
There rests with me that stubborn sense
Of something incomplete.

And yet . . .

You have brewed tea for me
On long rainy afternoons
And learned just how I like it,
Sugar, lemon, and then water;
You have played Schubert for me
And sometimes the strange exotic lamentations
Of your father's land;
You have sat long hours attentive to my tales,
Witness of my futile life and incredible ambitions;
You have curled before the firelight
And matched your softened silver whispers
To my hushed and heavy words;
You have leaned on rain with me

And swallowed wind by gustfuls;
You have told me all your story
And I have told you all of mine;

And yet I do not love you.

Tell me that I want from you
Only beastly carnal satisfaction;
Perhaps . . . and yet you have given more,
For you have fed my mind, my heart,
But left untouched my soul.
Could that be why I do not love you?

H. ROONEY PELLETIER

PRINTED AND MADE IN CANADA

By J. KEMP WALDIE

I.

'PRINTED and Made in Canada' on the verso of any title page means, bluntly, *caveat emptor*. It is the imprint of books distinguished by an ugly shoddiness which has been unequalled since the seventeenth century. It is the sales argument by which Canadians, stirred by some inexplicable sense of patriotism, are expected to pay a high price for something cheap and nasty on the supposition that it is the best their poor country can do. As Touchstone so aptly put it: 'An ill-favoured thing, sir, but mine own.'

As a matter of fact, it requires little more trouble and no more money to produce a worthy book, and when the job is well done the money at present spent on sham might be devoted to better purposes, until fifty-cent booklets compete with twenty-dollar *soi-disant* editions-de-luxe. For example, The First Edition Club, London, selects what in its opinion are the fifty best produced books each year. Its choices have been so good that no one has criticized them, yet the spread in price among the fifty books chosen in 1928 was from sixty cents to sixty-one dollars and thirty cents and in 1930 the range was from sixty cents to three hundred and sixty-eight dollars and ten cents. The half-crown booklets are enabled to compete with volumes sixty-one times their price because the club has systematized the criteria unconsciously applied by book buyers: the committee regards each book as having a possible maximum of fifty marks and the score is estimated in the following proportions: for paper, 5; for typographical design, 10; for binding, 10; for relation to price, 10; and for 'general impression,' 15. By this means, as the catalogue explains, it is possible for 'a seven-and-six-penny novel, which in the nature of things could not vie in paper or binding with a three-guinea volume, to make up lost ground in relation to price, or even in general impression.' The 1930 selection also disproves the popular fallacy that to be 'fine' a book must be made by hand, for eighty-eight per cent. of the books were machine set on (English) Lanston Monotype machines.

Similarly in the United States, where the American Institute of Graphic Arts chooses the 'Fifty Books of the Year,' the price range of books selected in 1928 was from a dollar fifty to seventy dollars and in 1930 was from fifty cents to one hundred dollars. Although the United States has lagged several years behind European book-making progress, only fifteen of the fifty books for 1930 were wholly hand set and one of these used type available on the (English) Lanston Monotype. The fifty-cent booklets issuing from the common Linotype were chosen with the hundred dollar hand set folio because 'the selection was based upon the physical merits of the book, irrespective of price, from the viewpoint of typographical design, press work, binding, and in general

the extent to which the publisher had solved the problem involved.'

The average bookbuyer need only glance through the stock at any bookshop to see that the Canadian books are even more unpleasant than the brightly jacketed four-flushers which bring us United States reprints. He will also be forced to admit that in books above the seventy-five cent class there is no comparison between our poor things and most of the books printed in Great Britain, The Netherlands, Germany, and Sweden, and many of those from Denmark, France, Italy, Czecho-Slovakia, and Poland. And when he looks at the books on his own shelves, it will become painfully obvious to him that what Canadian books are still able to stand are a disgrace to his library.

Why do our books look and behave so badly? Believe it or not the first reason is the paper.

Roughly, ninety per cent. of Canadian books are printed either on 'feather-weight' or 'art' papers. 'Feather-weight' paper is the most consistent and serious offender. If you wish to gain an idea of its disadvantages and advantages write a long letter to a friend on ordinary good quality white blotting paper. No matter how carefully you shape the letters they come out strangely distorted and at the end of every syllable the pen is clogged beyond use. This becomes so irritating that soon you forego the almost sub-conscious satisfaction of craftsmanship in doing something well and blunder ahead only anxious to finish the letter. The bulk of the blotting paper requires such an enormous envelope that your friend's first impression will be that the letter is unusually long. By the time he has struggled through your blurred and careless calligraphy he is convinced it is very long. Now if the words you committed to this blurry mess were worth the effort they will be worth re-reading; yet your friend at the second reading finds the fluff which clogged your pen still coming away, this time bringing some of the inky letter with it.

This is in fact happening. It is impossible to register a clean impression of any type on 'feather-weight' paper and the type becomes more clogged with each impression. Under such circumstances you cannot expect a decent job from the printer.

Then your friend found pieces of your letter coming away as fluff at his touch. With the book the facts are even more unpleasant; it will slowly disappear whether anyone touches it or not. Moreover, unless the leaves are over-sewn they will fall away from the cover after slight use.

The only advantage of this bulky paper is to comply with the publishers' belief that books must be a certain size and thickness, but not a certain weight, to sell for a certain price. That is why all novels are within a fraction of five by seven inches in width and height and one inch thick;

while biographical books, which cost more, are about five by eight and a half inches and the same thickness. These are ugly. If a book must be an inch thick to sell for two fifty it should be at least six and a half by nine inches in width and height to be properly proportioned. When one realizes that the more attractive and handy little volumes of the Travelers' Library contain stories of the same length, and that many volumes of Everyman's Library contain about half as many words again, it will be seen that our clumsy books are unnecessary. In other words, by subterfuge and the use of bad materials, the publisher and bookseller expect you to pay two fifty for a book because it is the thickness you have been taught to associate with two fifty and not because it is the kind you might prefer.

In fairness it must be admitted that British books are only now passing out of a similar stage. Nevertheless seventy-five per cent. of Canadian books are thicker per hundred words than those of any other country with the exception of some United States offerings.

It is thought in other countries that the public is no longer fooled by unwelcome artificial bulk. In Canada even booksellers, who might be expected to know better, are victims of the old delusion. Recently I heard a prosperous Toronto bookseller say to a customer: 'This is one of the best written books we have had this year, but personally I think it is too thin for the price they are asking.'

'Art' papers may be even more obnoxious. These are the coated, glossy papers which often smell unpleasantly, reflect an intolerable glare on the eyes, wear rapidly from handling and completely disintegrate when subjected to damp. They are used because they take a finer screen half-tone block than any other; in other words they are used for pictures which are a little better reproduced than those in a daily newspaper. Against this single advantage they present new problems to the printer and binder. The irregularity of their resistance to, or absorption of, printing ink produces uneven printing from sheet to sheet; unless worked under ideal conditions bits of the surface come off on the type; and they can be expected to crack at the folds as a matter of course, so that the book is sure to come to pieces.

Unsatisfactory as a book printed on such paper is, the practice of disrupting a book's harmony by inserting illustrations on coated paper among uncoated pages of text is still more objectionable. Illustrations should be regarded as book decoration; they should be executed after the type has been set with the aim of blending with it so that the opened pages of type and design will appear as a unit. Sir Emery Walker says: 'The element which makes for the success of book ornament is a perfect harmony between the mechanically printed page of type and the artist's inventions intended to decorate it. Too often illustrations which might be quite suitable for elucidating the text have not the least value in ornamenting the page.' (Sir Emery's

words may be taken as *ex cathedra* because he is the greatest influence in bookmaking of all time. He was the inspirer and instructor of William Morris; technical advisor to the Kelmscott Press and partner in all but name. He was the practical partner of the Doves Press and designer of the Doves type, said to be the finest roman ever cut. He advised Ricketts and Shannon at the Vale Press. He designed the famous Subiaco and Ptolemy types of the great Ashendene Press. He has designed the new type for Count Harry Kessler's Cranach Press, Weimar, and acts as his advisor. At the same time he has been a successful commercial printer for half a century and produces the finest commercial reproductive work done today.)

Fortunately there is no excuse for using such paper. This magazine, for example, is not printed on coated paper, yet its decorations and illustrations are satisfactorily reproduced and have the added attraction of being in harmony with the text. An artist's wood engraving if mounted type high would reproduce adequately here. On slightly better paper original etchings could be reproduced if the impress were heavy enough. Photo-engravers can now make a deeply etched block which is adequate for ordinary pressure on all papers, while the Pantone process, which gives better results, was specially designed for newspaper, the worst paper of all.

If the publisher wants colour, nothing is more satisfactory than the stencil process which the Curwen Press has used for some of the finest books recently produced in England, while Tolmer uses it for cheap children's books in France. Furthermore the offset process can be used instead of the letterpress method on any good paper. In England and Germany during the last two to three years cheap magazines have been printed, type and coloured pictures together, by offset on uncoated paper.

Our own misuses of paper seem to suggest that some book makers are fooling the public or that the job is badly done simply because it has always been done that way here.

The methods by which Canadian books are held together and attached to their covers provoke the same deductions.

When the spine of the cover is secured to the ends of the pages, and the tapes, cords, or thongs on which the pages are sewn are securely laced into the cover, the book is said to be 'bound'; otherwise it is said to be 'cased.' Most modern books are cased. When a book is adequately cased the leaves are sewn to tapes which are pasted down on the insides of the cover. Tapes give the maximum of support with the minimum of resistance to easy opening. When you open such a book you see the impress of the tapes on the fly leaf which shows you that the book will hold together as well as machinery can put it together. (With hand bound books the cords, being laced in, have to be felt for.) The most general commercial method is to sew cords into the ends of the pages and sew behind them; the result is that the book is strong enough if well done, but too

stiff to stand the strain of being opened frequently.

The Canadian method generally falls short of these. Most frequently the use of cords or tapes has been discarded and only seven or eight strands of thread hold the leaves together, while in most cases only the end papers hold the entire weight of the leaves to their cover and the only thing that holds the end papers to the leaves is a fraction of an inch of paste down one side. Insecure as this method is, it is at least consistent; for if the books are seldom used it will last as long as the paper lasts.

That is as far as the consistency goes. What Douglas Cockerell said of English books thirty years ago applies here today: 'Very great efforts have been made in the decoration of cloth covers, and it is a pity that the methods of construction have not been adequately considered. If cloth cases are to be looked upon as a temporary binding, then it seems a pity to waste so much trouble on their decoration; and if they are to be looked upon as permanent binding, it is a pity the construction is not better.' If he had included obnoxious imitation leathers with the practical cloth, the quotation would have fitted perfectly; for on many badly constructed Canadian books money has been wasted on artificial leather, attempts to make the cloth look stronger than it is, or garish ornamentation which one would not care to see on one's shelves.

It is as unreasonable to expect trade editions to be bound as it is to expect them to be cased by any but the simplest machine methods; but it does seem reasonable to expect unnecessary expense to be spared on ephemeral covers especially as this expense is being spared with success in other countries.



AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP

PERHAPS the chief interest of this collection of seventeen lectures* is to be found in the revelation it affords of the spirit and temper of maturing American scholarship. Although the advances and developments that are here recorded are by no means all due to the work of American scholars the emphasis, quite naturally, is upon their contribution.

Reading through these essays one can be left in no doubt concerning the characteristic features of the American attitude towards learning. In the main they are two: perfection of organization, and pre-occupation with facts.

The importance attached to organization and

its corollary, specialization, is evident throughout, and the University is taken as the main organizing center. In the very first paragraph of the Introduction, Dixon Ryan Fox remarks that: 'In modern times, up to very recently, it has had no rival in the organization of scholarship.' Yet the Royal Society of England was hardly a university foundation, and without going back as far as Galileo and Bacon, one seems to remember even as late as the nineteenth century, somnolent universities, and lonely scholars and scientists, working often with sadly inadequate apparatus, quite apart from these alleged centers of organization. The modern university is even more the fruit of their labours than the inspiring and directing agent. It was they who created the demand and laid out the trail.

Yet Professor Ryan is a Professor of History! So the emphasis on present-day organization is all the more significant. Pre-occupation with the American scene, with 'practical' values and with the making of a future by planned scientific effort, has its usual result in distortion and obscuring of the background of the past. It may be that one sure sign of approaching maturity in American scholarship will be a correction of this tendency. The still continuing shallow-rootedness of American life and thought is intelligible enough as the product of rapid expansion and widespread prosperity brought about by the abounding energies of a vigorous and optimistic people. The experiences of a century or more have left their mark.

But powerful influences are at work now to force a deepening of the roots. Adversity is, perhaps, the most potent of them all. There would appear to be something more than an analogy between the needs of American scholarship and the needs of American politics. Deeper and more patient penetration, and a wider range of integration seem to be called for in both.

With organization and cooperation goes specialization and all its dangers of myopia and narrowness. These essays afford abundant proof that the temper of the American specialist predisposes him to the collection and organization of facts, even though he may lack some of the equipment for their due interpretation.

It is true that such a temper has its value. The specialist's contempt for tradition, the thoroughgoing 'kenosis' with which he prepares himself, and the skill and thoroughness with which he collects and organizes his facts, have high scientific value, and are well enough suited to the spirit of the society that he serves. As Dr. Wesley Mitchell remarks in his survey of Economics, 'Factual investigations are straining the framework which is supposed to contain them.' Such strainings are indeed the growing pains of truth, and America is discharging a most salutary service in the world by concentrating upon the production of them.

But the adventurous undertaking has its corresponding dangers. We have already referred to some of them. Another is the disposition to confuse scientific method with sheer laboriousness.

*A QUARTER CENTURY OF LEARNING. As Recorded in Lectures Delivered at Columbia University on the Occasion of the One Hundred and Seventy-fifth Anniversary of Its Founding. (Columbia University Press; pp. 380; \$3.50).

The fact-collector's lofty contempt for the 'easy' work of interpretation that he leaves to the 'arm-chair' student is a disquieting sign that the specialist has at times both the conceit and the limitations of the skilled day-labourer. Perspiration is not the only guarantee of either the value or the intensity of labour, and Behaviourism has value as a method rather than as a Religion.

Moreover, in the search for 'facts', it is easy to forget that the fact itself has no actuality until form is given to existence by the importation of meaning. If the fact-collector is content to remain in partial ignorance of the 'meanings' through which he constitutes his facts, he can hardly expect the thinker to be so self-denying.

This shyness towards Interpretation, towards Ideas in fact, may account for the absence from the book of any survey of Philosophy, as also for the fact that the lectures on History and on Education are among the weakest in the set. The account of progress in Education is confined almost entirely to a discussion of school techniques and reveals little sign of any understanding that the real problems of modern education reach far beyond the school. It is curious that a people so contemptuous of tradition should, in some directions, evince such faith in the established instrument. Again one feels that not Techniques but Ideas are the true solvents that eat away the obstacles to progress.

The best essay in the book is the most critical, that by Professor MacIver on Sociology. One sentence may be quoted as having an application over the whole field of American Scholarship:—

Any study of a culture that is not history or mere description demands, in the vast complex of interactive and incessantly changeable factors, a philosophical-scientific grasp of the unit and equilibrium of manifold related elements, demands principles of significant selection within the array of phenomena, demands in fact not only a very wide knowledge but a rare power of analysis, evaluation and synthesis. . . .

Apart from this it cannot discover an adequate scientific basis. Apart from this it is in danger of degenerating into a rather childish search for external patterns, symbols and uniformities.

But there is evidence enough in the book that shyness towards Ideas is far from being universal. Thus the essays on Jurisprudence and on Government bear many marks of the influence of ideas arising from the study of Psychology and Biology. There are also good discussions of the present state of Physics and Chemistry, fields where the play of ideas seems at times to be almost too strong.

One closes the book with a comfortable feeling that American learning is still far from the stiffness and ossification of old age, and that its weaknesses are those of over-confident youth rather than of opinionated and fossilized eld. Something of infinite value is destined to emerge from so much enthusiastic energy, wasteful and misdirected as some of it may seem. Even as a corrective of the well-meant exaggerations of Flexner's recent book this collection has timely value.

F. CLARKE

OUR NOISY YEARS

One tool the ancients did not use,
When limning us their earnest hell.
Their rhythmic flames can ne'er infuse
Our hearts with terror; we who dwell
Where sirens shriek and trolleys crash,
Where grinding steel on stone employs
On quivering sense hell's latest lash,
The witless agony of noise.

Now Satan's torrid alchemist,
With damned leer, and salesman's bow,
Presents life's final thumbscrew twist,
A motor-car with radio!

Ah, which of us more timorous
Would linger with this raucous choir,
Or shun, were choosing given us,
The fierce, sweet melody of fire?

ELEANOR MCNAUGHT

LAMENT FOR SUMMER

And now the geese are flown and now the river
Is low, and on its banks brown nettles stand
Rasping their shrivelled reedy stalks together
While dead leaves pace an eerie saraband.

And clouds low-scudding over marsh and meadow
Fast-driven by a yelping wind, portend
The dwindling sap, the gathering cold, the narrow
Restraint of frost that April shall amend.

Make your lament for swallows skimming lightly;
For bull frogs mouthing lyrics brief and shrill;
For orange poppies, rain drops falling brightly—
For all the beauty winter cannot kill.

LEO KENNEDY

THAT'S AUTUMN PLAYING

That's Autumn playing on his flute;
Sweeter and sweeter each note is growing.
He has put on his piebald suit,—
That's Autumn playing on his flute.
He's trying to lure poor Summer's fruit
So it will drown where Winter's flowing!
That's Autumn playing on his flute;
Sweeter and sweeter each note is growing.

W. MCRAE FAWCETT



M. ALFRED DESROCHERS, POÈTE REALISTE

By ROBERT CHOQUETTE

Mr. Alfred DesRochers, from Sherbrooke, is a new-comer in the field of French-Canadian literature. Born in 1901, the son of a défricheur, he left school at the age of fourteen to become, for a while, a sort of jack-of-all-trades, plunging himself, all the while, into the great French poets of the 19th century. This carefree education, so different from our traditional methods, together with the poet's extraordinary power of observation, may explain the strong realism with which Mr. DesRochers' verse is imbued. In Mr. DesRochers' volume *A l'Ombre de l'Orford* is to be found, besides some poems of a broad lyricism, a series of sonnets entitled *The Cycle of the Fields and the Woods* which depict French-Canadian scenes with a vigour and a brilliancy never attained before by any poet in Canada.

In the following article, which is an extract from a lecture delivered after the appearance of Mr. DesRochers' book, M. Robert Choquette lays stress upon the realism of his confrère's series of sonnets, while he incidentally stings some representatives of the so-called school of folk-writers.

PRECISONS la leçon que nous donne M. DesRochers, et pour cela étudions de plus près les sonnets du *Cycle des champs et des bois*.

Je m'épargnerai cette pédanterie qui consiste à relever des trouvailles techniques, à dénombrer dans tel vers les voyelles, dans tel autre les consonnes ou les diphtongues, tout cela pour montrer la finesse du poète et la mienne par-dessus le marché. Venons-en donc à la substance des sonnets de M. DesRochers, poète réaliste. Si vous vous contentez de feuilleter son volume, en captant ici et là quelques vers, vous pourrez garder l'impression que ce poète est, avant tout, un merveilleux appareil photographique. Car les vers qui vous auront frappé, à première lecture, sont à peu près tous des vers qui décrivent le contour des choses, des vers matériels, j'ose dire, qu'il semble qu'on pourrait exprimer avec un crayon. Exemples:—

Le cuir de leur visage

Est ridé comme l'eau des remous près des quais.

Une neige gluante et large tourne au vent.

Le muffle horizontal, un taureau se lamente.

Cependant, lecture faite, voici qu'autour des mots qui se sont tus vibrent à l'infini je ne sais quelles harmoniques, voici qu'une atmosphère vous enveloppe, que remuent ces 'océans qui dorment en nous,' que les mystérieuses ondes de la suggestion éveillent la vie subconsciente.

Car voilà la magie qui émane de ces sonnets: la puissance suggestive. Et comment donc l'artiste, en quatorze vers hérissés de guets-apens techniques, comment le poète, dans ces sonnets qui étreignent le sujet comme feraient des poings fermés, réussit-il à évoquer de si vastes tableaux, à faire de si larges trouées sur toute une vie collective? C'est que le poète parle de choses qu'il

connaît. Cette vie qu'il raconte, il l'a vécue; et c'est l'homme qui l'a vécue, non le littérateur en quête de notes. Aussi bien, puise-t-il dans ce fonds de vérité, cette mine de richesses qu'est l'expérience directe. Puisant à même cette mine, et, restreint comme il l'est par le sonnet, n'en pouvant prendre que quelques trésors, il va de soi que l'artiste extraiera les plus expressifs, les plus susceptibles de créer l'atmosphère. De plus, ces traits caractéristiques (encore parce que l'auteur puise dans un sujet pour lui illimité) paraissent toujours naturels, jamais tirés aux cheveux. Le sujet coule d'abondance. On sent flotter autour tout ce qui n'a pas été ajouté, tout ce qu'un autre aurait dit. Le tableau, c'est nous qui le complétons, nous qui entassons entre les lignes, dans les marges, ce qu'il éveille en nous d'impressions latentes, d'états d'âme oubliés, peut-être insoupçonnés. Comme tout véritable poème, ces sonnets ne sont qu'un tremplin d'où on s'élance dans le rêve, ne sont que la porte ouverte sur le monde intérieur; et c'est quand ils finissent qu'ils commencent.

* * *

Cette vérité dont le *Cycle des champs et des bois* est imprégné, elle émane d'abord des personnages. Ces habitants, ces draveurs, DesRochers a vécu parmi eux; aussi bien, sont-ils, dans son livre, en chair et en os, et non empaillés de rhétorique, et non saupoudrés d'une farine de vertus d'écolière. Ils n'abattent pas un arbre en chantant des cantiques; ils sont sales, et riches de défauts, ils boivent et ils sacrent, mais, enfin, ce sont des draveurs, ce sont des hommes enfin, et la sorte d'hommes à tailler un pays!

Voilà bien qui dérange à peu près toute notre école de terroir canadien. Qu'est devenu ce bon Canayen-type, découpé à même un pan du paradis? Baptiste a-t-il ôté sa tuque de parade et sa ceinture fléchée? Est-il enfin possible qu'un homme des bois, en poésie canadienne, se voit doté d'un clavier nerveux, trahisse une sensibilité, des désirs, des passions? que notre terroir ne baigne plus dans un sentimentalisme de couvent, dans l'attendrissement de ces faiblards qui, par crainte de la vie vivante, se réfugient dans le passé? Eh bien! oui; finie la pastorale, finies les bergerettes; fini le trémolo sur le vieux rateau, sur la vieille brouette, sur la Grise, simplement et uniquement parce qu'ils sont anciens! Le paysage, ici, s'anime. Les personnages sont vivants. C'est contemporain, sans cesser pour cela d'être éternel.

Contemporain . . . Le mot seul met sur le gril quelques uns de nos bons 'terroirants' (a nickname given to some of our classical folk-writers). Et l'on arrive à comprendre que si notre littérature de terroir est à ce point caduque d'aspect, c'est que nos poètes du genre décrivent la campagne et l'âme canadienne du siècle dernier. Avec un tel écart entre le poète et son sujet, est-il étonnant qu'ils parlent une langue morte? Et notez bien que ceux que j'ai en tête en ce moment ont

vécu à la campagne, ont grandi parmi ces choses et ces hommes qu'ils décrivent. A quel point s'est donc cristallisée dans leur cervelle 'littéraire' cette peinture apprise au collège, qu'ils ne se doutent même pas de l'évolution de la terre canadienne? Est-ce, purement et simplement, de la myopie? Paresse de l'oeil? Conspiration candide où l'on s'entend pour pommader la vie des champs? S'il fallait que ce fût une manière de collaborer, par des prospectus en vers, au Département de la Colonisation? . . .

Cette vérité dont les sonnets de DesRochers sont pétris, elle émane du paysage. Il a les couleurs, les parfums de la réalité. On peut le voir, l'entendre, le respirer à chaque vers. Et c'est notre paysage, et il est interprété par quelqu'un qui ne l'a pas seulement regardé mais vu. La fleur pousse à sa place, l'oiseau chante à son heure. Je parlais il y a un instant des peintures livresques de nos poètes théoriques. Ce qui s'applique à la description de leurs personnages s'applique à celle de leurs paysages. Le style descriptif, dans leurs oeuvres, porte à faux parce qu'il est emprunté à des livres français, à des morceaux choisis devenus classiques. On trace cette étonnante trajectoire de passer par l'Europe pour décrire Québec.

Et c'est tout ce terroir idyllique, légendaire, anonyme comme les limbes, aux habitants de plâtre et aux villages de carton, que les virils sonnets du poète de Sherbrooke annulent d'un trait de plume. Et si, dans cette brève étude, je m'obstine à voir en M. DesRochers le poète réaliste plus que le poète romantique (ce qu'il est par instinct), c'est que ce réaliste a rendu un service immédiat à notre poésie de terroir, c'est que le "Cycle des champs et des bois" fait de lui le poète essentiellement canadien que notre régionalisme attendait, celui qui a trouvé une formule rêvée.

CALVARY

Upon these trees was Autumn crucified. . . .

Do you not see the thorns, the ready bier

Of leaves, the stains of blood? . . . Do you not hear

His Eli Eli echo? . . . It has died.

OLD MAID'S WEDDING

Autumn

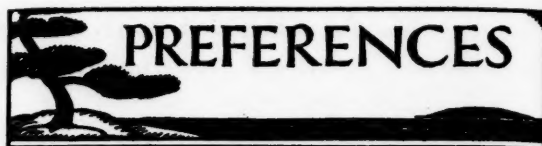
Is an old bride.

She wears a veil of mist.

Upon her are thrown confetti—

Dead leaves. . . .

ABRAHAM M. KLEIN



IT is characteristic of the modern age in literature that much more has been heard about the assonances in Wilfred Owen's poetry than about the passion and the mystery of it. Setting aside the vast majority who would be quick to protest that they didn't know him from Robert, the chances are that the mention of his name will call up a mental picture of certain weird and unheroic couplets which nearly rhyme but just don't, as in the often-quoted opening of 'Strange Meeting':—

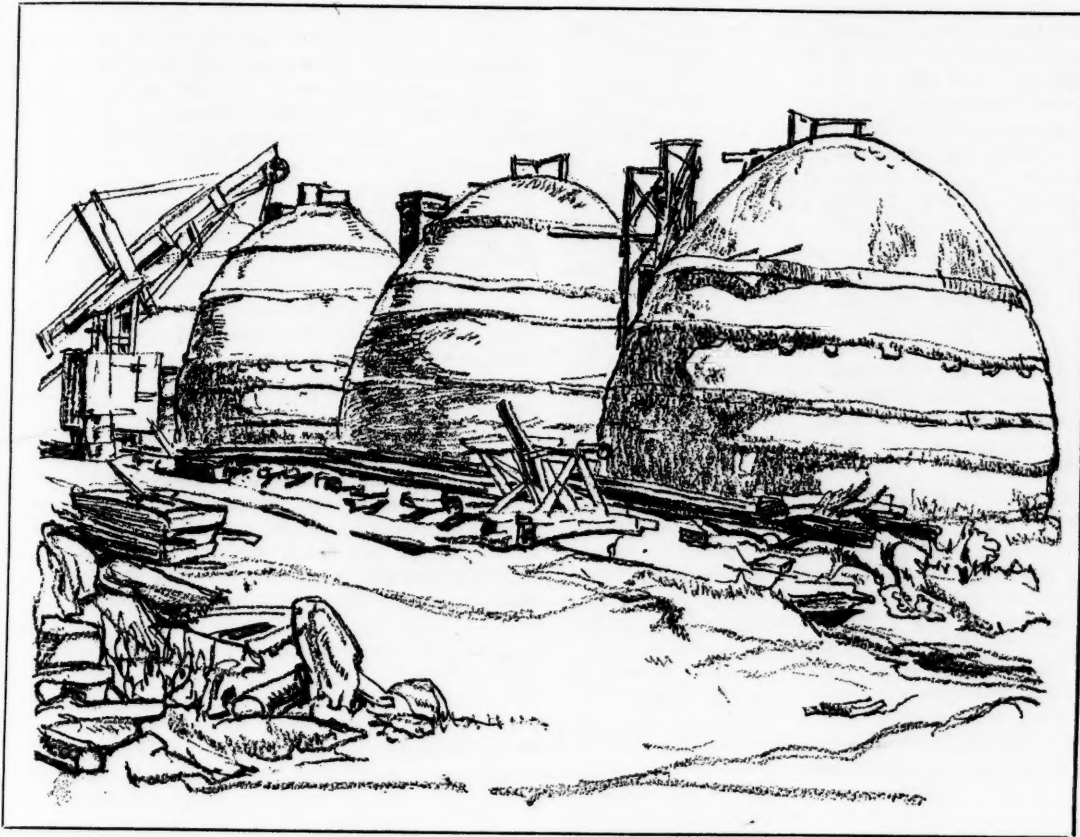
It seemed that out of battle I escaped
Down some profound dull tunnel, long since scooped
Through granites which titanic wars had groined.
Yet also there encumbered sleepers groined,
Too fast in thought or death to be bestirred.
Then, as I probed them, one sprang up, and stared
With piteous recognition in fixed eyes,
Lifting distressful hands as if to bless.

It takes only half an eye to see that, technically as well as imaginatively, this is a rare achievement. The way the two words 'escaped' and 'scooped,' for instance, throw one another into relief so that each seems cavernous as never before, the close adjustment of the style to the mood, the subterranean rhymes lying encumbered under the half-rhymes like the tranced sleepers in the poet's vision—all this the true student of poetry will know how to value and enjoy. There is something supreme in these lines, suggestive almost of a Keats's 'Hyperion' made modern, with Cézanne and Dante behind it instead of Milton and the Renaissance. Only a master of poetry could have written them.

This passage was not written out of the blue. Wilfred Owen had been feeling his way towards it for a long time. Compare it with an earlier piece in which the same device is attempted:—

Our brains ache, in the merciless iced east winds that
knive us. . . .
Wearied we keep awake because the night is silent . . .
Low drooping flares confuse our memory of the salient . . .
Worried by silence, sentries whisper, curious, nervous, . . .

Here we can feel the innovator, the experimenter at work. No doubt, it takes a certain courage to rhyme 'knife us' with 'nervous,' even if you are an Englishman and don't sound the 'r,' but that doesn't mean that the result is great poetry. I doubt whether there are more than fifty or a hundred lines in all Wilfred Owen's volume in which he really puts his assonances 'across' and I wonder whether—as a deliberate method in poetry—he could have carried them much further than he did. I can see that assonances might be used in a contributory way, as they have been used internally and intermittently since poetry began. But I cannot see them as end-syllables all through



CHARCOAL BURNERS AT KEARNY

By CHARLES GOLDHAMMER

a long poem if only because they retard the tempo so.

It is fashionable nowadays to think lightly of pure rhymes. The modern poet either eschews them or turns them out lightly with his tongue in his cheek. Yet it is amazing to look back and see what changes have been rung on them. Such, we shall find, are the resources of pure rhyming that it has taken several centuries to exhaust them. Can we say or predict as much of assonance? I doubt it. The chance to use assonance again in Wilfred Owen's way and with his profound justification may not come again for years and years.

Considering his poetry as a whole—if I may call that a whole which is only a young poet's fragment—it is surprising to find how traditional he is—a devotee of Keats, if you please, who never renounced his devotion. His very best work—excepting only 'Strange Meeting'—is in quite conventional forms—sonnet, rhymed stanza, and so on. The poem by which he will probably be remembered longest is not a specifically modern poem. It is a poem that, given the requisite experience of what happened in 1914 and bids fair to happen again at no distant date, might have been written in any age when poetry was vital and passionate. It is not an unknown poem, but it is not half as well known as it ought to be and this is my apology for quoting some of it:—

Red lips are not so red
As the stained stones kissed by the English dead.
Kindness of wooed and wooer
Seems shame to their love pure.
O Love, your eyes lose lure
When I behold eyes blinded in my stead.

Your voice sings not so soft,—
Though even as wind murmuring through rafters
loft,—
Your dear voice is not dear,
Gentle, and evening clear,
As theirs whom none now hear,
Now earth has stopped their piteous mouths that
coughed.

.....

Here, I suspect, is the climax of all the English war-poetry. Sassoon, Owen's friend and first editor, comes nearest to it, but he lacks the intensity and the self-abandonment to write thus. With such exalted moments in mind, it is easy to understand the feelings of Edmund Blunden, his present editor (in *The Poems of Wilfred Owen*, Chatto and Windus, 1931, which is the occasion of these inadequate remarks of mine) when he confesses that he is 'haunted by comparisons between his genius and his premature death and the wonder and the tragedy of his admired Keats.' This is not the extravagance of a contemporary, the parallel is a real one.

Only we mustn't push it too far. We may enquire ironically and at a safe distance 'Who killed John Keats?' But we shall not ask this of Wilfred Owen. All we need to be told is that if the Armistice had come a week earlier he would probably be alive now, leading the hollow men out of the waste land. How many dead Germans was it worth? I haven't been able to calculate. But perhaps we got one of their poets the same week and that may have evened things up a bit.

INCONSTANT READER

A LONELY LIFE

By URSEL MULL

THE tragic thing in Anne Cardigan's life was that at the age of seventeen she had an attack of scarlet fever which left her partially deaf. Had it not been for that she would have become a nun instead of her sister Rose. Anne was born to be a nun.

She is an old woman now,—fifty or sixty. She lives in a couple of rooms at the back of the house that was left to her by her father, the late J. W. Cardigan. Many queer and beautiful things are huddled together in those rooms: a clock that came out from Ireland and a night-blooming Ceres and rugs and quilts that her mother made from scraps of cloth that were left over from the girls' dresses. Outside the back door the lilacs bloom as they have been blooming for sixty years and to the west side of the house the grass grows long in the orchard. Sometimes, on hot summer days, Anne takes a chair out into the orchard and does her mending there or works on a nightgown for some poor woman who is having another baby.

Anne gets excited whenever she is in a room where there is a baby. She blushes a rosy pink and tweaks the baby's toes and says, 'This little pig went to market', in a high faltering voice.

The couple who live in the upper story of Anne's house have a baby girl. Sometimes she cries at night. Then the young father gets out of bed and walks around the room with her, trying to get her quiet. The mother is preparing a bottle. The man tries singing. He has a gruff unpleasant voice and the baby only cries the louder. He whistles for a bit. Then he begins to swear. The young wife protests, in a sleepy, half-hearted way.

Anne sits up in bed, a smile trembling on her narrow lips. She caresses the edging on her pillow with thin nervous fingers. Although her hearing is impaired, her other senses, more keenly whetted, drink in the scene that is being enacted in the room above as vividly and as intimately as if no boards and rafters intervened.

About the people in the front part of the house she is never quite easy. They are middle-aged Americans and they have no children. The man is a paper-maker. He gets drunk on Saturday nights and twangs on a guitar and sings and shouts. He chases his wife around the apartment. She shrieks with laughter. Anne sits up in bed, and her teeth begin to chatter. She is terrified

that something dreadful will happen, something that might get into the papers. She wonders what they would do if she were to knock loudly on the wall and call out: 'Quiet, please.' Her lips move silently. She clasps her crucifix in thin shaking hands.

About once a week Anne makes some maple candy. She moves silently around her kitchen, smiling to herself. When the candy is finished, she places it in a shoe-box lined with wax-paper. Then she puts on her things and takes her gift to the sisters at the hospital.

They are the light of her life. 'The Sisters.' There is a caress in the way that she says it. 'The Sisters.'

She is forever visiting the hospital; hovering along the corridors, dodging into sick-rooms, praying in the chapel. You see her assisting at sales of home-made food and needlework that are got up for the purpose of raising money for the hospital. On such occasions, her whole face quivers with happy pride. Her hands flutter over the angel-food and the baby-bonnets, dumbly urging you to buy, . . . for the Sisters.

Rose comes home every summer for a visit. She stands very erect in her black robes. You feel that there is no nonsense about Rose and that she secretly looks upon Anne as something of a fool. Anne is stricken speechless in the presence of her holy sister. Her face quivers. Her hands flutter pointlessly.

Rose has a flip way of saying things. She has a little trick of dropping you a wink every now and then in the course of a conversation. You feel certain somehow that deafness would not have prevented her from picking off a man and running him as she now runs a big hospital somewhere in the American middle-west.

Anne's constant companion for years has been an anaemic-looking cat called Princess. On summer evenings, Anne stands in her door-way, beside the lilac-bushes, softly calling:

'PRIN-cess!
PRIN-cess!'

Princess comes. She is never far away. Anne picks her up and fondles her for a while. Then she goes into the house, closes the door behind her, and turns the key in the lock.

She reads her evening paper thoroughly from beginning to end, smiling foolishly over the comic strips and becoming unnecessarily agitated over the more dramatic news items. Terrible things are always happening in the world, beyond her walls. Holy men and women are being massacred in Mexico, and in Russia the houses of God are being converted into barracks and theatres and rooms for storing food.

Once, in the dead of winter, Dr. Denholm, a distant relative of Anne's and also coroner for the district around St. Chloe, was called to a village in the north to investigate the sudden death of a man of sixty. It was the doctor's verdict that the man had died as the result of having taken a large quantity of strychnine into his system. The man's wife was arrested, and also a young man of twenty-two. The whole thing

blazed out in the papers, in headlines an inch high.

Anne followed the case with intense personal interest. She read how the woman had been giving herself clandestinely to the youth over a period of many months, how they had decided to murder the husband and begin life anew in the city of Montreal or in the United States. The youth, who was part Indian, bought a box of strychnine at the general store, slyly dropping a few remarks about poisoning foxes. The woman had put the strychnine into her husband's soup as many as five times. The first few times it seemed to have no effect, so she increased the dose. All this came out at the trial.

Anne read the accounts with feelings of guilt and shame. In fancy, she was the woman, whose age was the same as her own, and she identified herself with the young man too, suffering an agony of remorse and fear, as she imagined him to be suffering. His picture appeared in the paper. He was a darkly handsome youth, with smouldering, sullen eyes. He was a foundling. If he had been her son, Anne thought, this thing would never have happened to him. Her brain became confused. Now she was the woman, now the young lover; now she was his mother; and now a sister of mercy, soothing his fevered brow and giving him strength to face his last night on this earth.

As the day of execution drew near, Anne became increasingly restless and unhappy. The night before the condemned pair were to meet death on the scaffold, Anne did not undress for bed. It was a hot August night. She prayed unceasingly, through the hours of darkness, for the repose of their souls. When day broke at last and she knew that they must be dead, she lay down, fully clothed, and fell into a troubled sleep from which she awoke unrefreshed and with a persistent feeling that in some obscure way she was to blame for everything that had happened.

The morning the Pope spoke over the radio, Anne hurried to a neighbour's house to listen-in. They made her sit quite close to the instrument so that she would hear every word. For a long while nothing happened, and they all sat around in the room, talking in low voices, waiting.

Anne was excited, and her face was flushed, like the face of a little girl at her first party. Her hands clasped and unclasped nervously in her lap. She kept thinking of her parents. If only they had lived for this day!

She wondered if Rose were listening, out in Ohio. She had a mad impulse to rush home and telephone to her while yet there was time. Still, it would cost a lot of money, she told herself. Besides, the sisters had a radio in the hospital. A wealthy patient . . .

A trumpet blew, echoed, and re-echoed.

He was coming.

Anne could scarcely contain her emotions. Her face was working grotesquely, and her eyes were bright with tears.

The papal procession was wending its way along the corridors of the Vatican. An organ

played, and hundreds of voices were raised in a Latin hymn. Anne could see it all: the richly-worked garments of the priests, the tapers. . .

Suddenly there was silence. All sounds were hushed to Anne, save the beating of her heart. The world, it seemed, was waiting expectantly, all operations great and small suspended.

His Holiness began to speak. His voice sounded hollow and a little frightened at first. So many unseen listeners, all over the world. . .

Anne sent up a little prayer to heaven. 'Please, God, give him strength; strength to send a message rolling and echoing around the world; a message that will put a stop to the rising tide of licentiousness.'

The voice became more sure of itself. It rose and fell majestically, like the waves of the sea. Anne thought of the vast expanse of green water that lay between her and that distant scene.

It was uncanny, but she could not shake off the notion that her mother and all the dear ones who had gone were listening too, not very far away. Only a few walls divided them, and one by one the walls were being knocked down.

Strange things. . .

Her father used to say that the air was full of voices, if we could only hear them. People thought that he was crazy.

Now the things that he had talked about were coming to pass. Miracles were happening every day and night. Life was not just a matter of living in a few rooms and going down to the post-office twice a day and seeing that the tenants paid their rents regularly. Life was vast, mysterious, exciting; and she was a part of it all, like the music and the ocean.

It was over. The lights were switched off. There was a murmur of familiar voices close at hand.

Anne's face was quivering, and some tears shook down over her black dress as she went swiftly out into the hall to put on her coat and hat.

She murmured a few words of thanks, the door was opened for her, and she hurried out into the bright glaring sunlight reflected from the snow.

She almost ran. Soon she was at her own door, slipping the enormous key into the lock, pushing the door open.

It was dim in the house, after the sunlight outside; but gradually her eyes became accustomed to the dimness. The objects in the room took on their old familiarity, bred of many years of association.

She leaned against the door, too exhausted to move any further. Suddenly a sense of futility swept over her. The little flame of exaltation died away. Everything was just as it had been two hours before.

She noticed Princess for the first time, curled up in the rocking-chair before the fire, gazing insolently up at her out of half-shut, yellow eyes. 'Get up,' she choked. 'You fat, lazy beast!' She threw her gloves at the cat, but they went wide of their mark. Princess, nevertheless, gathered

herself together, dropped noiselessly to the carpet, and disappeared behind the stove.

Anne burst into tears. She flung herself into the chair and covered her face with her thin white hands.

She sobbed brokenly for a while, and then she dabbed at her eyes with a twisted ball of a handkerchief. Sniffing, she blew her nose.

Princess watched her from a corner of the room, purring pleasantly, like a kettle on the hob, and looking absurdly wise.



THE NEW WRITERS

XXIII

LIONEL BRITTON

BRITTON'S play *Brain*, published last year, was received with bitterly various opinions by the critics; his novel *Hunger and Love* did nothing to compose these differences, nor is it likely that his next play, *Spacetime Inn*, which is to appear shortly, will bring any agreement. The chorus of admirers is led by Bernard Shaw, supported by Bertrand Russell and most of the weeklies, while on the other side stand St. John Ervine, with *The Times*, *The Morning Post*, and other dailies. Such a clear-cut division is clearly due to the subject matter rather than the form, for Lionel Britton is a rebel, and an angry one. He looks at our western civilization and finds it bad. Its cruelty, brutality, and profit-seeking callousness disgust him. And no wonder. In *Hunger and Love*, which is admittedly autobiographical in its general outline, we find the hero, Arthur Phelps, first an errand boy at twelve shillings a week, then slowly and painfully rising—it takes him years to do it—to a couple of pounds. The shops he works in, his employers, his cheap lodgings, his landlady, his mean little temptations, the whole of his sordid, inhibited daily life is described with a wealth of striking detail and a power that are masterly, and which no one who had not lived that life could achieve. The nervous, headlong, at times almost telegraphic style is here thoroughly appropriate.

We like Arthur, for all his dirty clothes and his shirt hanging out, all the more because he will not be crushed. Without education, without advantages of any sort, he has that in him which is truly called human: he longs to contribute to the good of the race, he longs also to secure his rightful share of the accumulated knowledge, art, and culture of mankind. Essentially honest, he sees colleagues and employers again and again betray the very code which they profess, himself suspected by them. Bound to the rock of poverty, balked and oppressed at every turn, he rises to Promethean anger against our 'trade civilization,' and refuses to believe that it is the best that man

can do. Seeing the state-machinery from below as few men have intelligently seen it, he is driven to the conclusion that it is controlled by the lowest, not the highest, type of man, by those who have scarcely risen above the level of the beast. In which indeed he is probably not far wrong; and if he sees purposeful wickedness where there is mostly only inertia and stupidity, it is as well, or even his spirit might have been broken.

As it is, Phelps-Britton will not give up his magnificent hope that the Human will get the better of the Beast, that a human society will come wherein every individual will function as smoothly as the cells in our body each take their share in the running of the whole. This hope is dramatically expressed in *Brain*, where all the really human men work together and succeed in building up a Super-brain which absorbs and remembers the achievements of every man and puts their totality at the service of the individuals from whom it draws its existence and its strength. The conception is worked out in a consistent and interesting manner. The whole play is austere and uncompromising in its technique. There is no love motive, no distracting incidents to make the hard pill of thought more acceptable to an audience.

From this dogmatic austerity Britton draws both his strength and his weakness. He can make us see the implications of the most trifling incidents as only great artists can; at times he can also carry us with him in sheer revolt, and his chapter on the war is unsurpassed as an expression of the mutinous protest of the underdog to whom nothing but the barest living has been granted by society, and who is now asked to give his very life to perpetuate the system that oppressed him. He makes us see and understand why Phelps refused to be a party to that foulest failure of the nationalist-capitalist system. And for the sake of his vigour, his powers of description, and his undoubted mastery of words we can forgive him much. But his detractors have some cause for complaint: it is true that now and again, especially in the latter part of his novel, he is guilty of turgid verbosity and quite wearisome repetition; it is true that when he — or should I say Arthur Phelps? but at the time Arthur is almost lost sight of, which I very much regret—when he discusses ideas and philosophers he has not always well digested them, and he sneers at past philosophers as members of the upper classes even when he has, unconsciously, made their ideas his own. It is true that before he can write the masterpiece of which he is undoubtedly capable he must further discipline his mind and his anger; that he must more often allow the artist in him to express his convictions indirectly through the medium of particular incidents, which he can do so well.

But in spite of all his faults, Britton is a man who can, and usually does, as Shaw put it, 'deliver the goods.' He is a powerful personality and he can write well, at times magnificently, for he has felt very deeply. Not his least endearing feature is that, though he attacks the bourgeoisie so

violently, he does not idealize the proletariat, thereby proving that he possesses in good measure that essential sense of balance without which no great art is possible.

G. M. A. GRUBE

CONTRIBUTORS

F. CLARKE is Professor of Education at McGill University. He has only recently come to Canada from South Africa.

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CADENCE AND MELODY

SHADOWS ON THE ROCK, by Willa Cather (Longmans, Green; pp. 280; \$2.50).

WILLA CATHER has shown a tendency of late to lead her readers to the outside of the casket, tracing with fine delicacy the mosaics and jewels which lie there, and only occasionally suggesting that less beautiful things may lurk within. The setting is nearly everything in *Death Comes for the Archbishop*; it is everything in *Shadows on the Rock*. The chief character of the book is a little girl of twelve or thirteen, Cécile, and the life of Quebec set out before us is no deeper than life as she saw and experienced it. But within these limits the book is an exquisite and fragrant work of art, delighting all the senses, and as satisfying as a Chaucerian tale. Of course there were depths in the life of Quebec in the seventeenth century, but there is no need for everyone to plumb them, and the artist is under no obligation to be a professional historian or psychologist. Willa Cather aims at neither distinction. But she succeeds in conveying here as elsewhere an aristocratic discrimination with regard to the externals and manners of life and character, which is all her own. Cécile is, like her creator, fastidious to her finger-tips. She has inherited from her mother a scrupulous concern for cleanliness and a reverence for the housewifely traditions of France. The quality of ordinary daily life is her responsibility: 'One made a climate within a climate; one made the days, the complexion, the special flavour, the special happiness of each day as it passed; one made life.' Willa Cather gives to these daily virtues of cleanliness and order an almost sacramental significance. 'Without order,' says Cécile's mother, 'our lives would be disgusting, like those of the poor savages. At home, in France, we have learned to do these things in the best way, and we are conscientious, and that is why we are called the most civilized people in Europe.' The ordinances of the Church, the daily ritual of the good housewife, these two together give protection and ballast to life as Cécile knows it. Somewhere in the background is the struggle of the pioneer with soil and climate, but to Cécile (and to Willa Cather for the purposes of this book) Canada means New France, with traditions of home and Church faithfully cherished.

In the Quebec of 1697 to 1698 Cécile moves about with happy piety. She lives half-way between the upper and lower towns, so that both rulers and people may come into the picture. The passage of the seasons is the only movement in the story. There is no adventure, no crisis, no strong emotion. The very absence of these is emphasized. On All Souls' Day Cécile 'was not sorrowful, though she supposed she was. . . . At

twelve years it is impossible to be sad on holy days, even on a day of sorrow; at that age the dark things, death, bereavement, suffering have only a dramatic value,—seem but strong and moving colours in the grey stretch of time.'

Willa Cather, in her preface to the *Best Stories of Sarah Orne Jewett* published in 1925, describes the effect produced by this idyllic kind of fiction. 'Every great story . . . must leave in the mind of the sensitive reader an intangible residuum of pleasure; a cadence, a quality of voice that is exclusively the writer's own, individual, unique. A quality that one can remember without the volume at hand, can experience over and over again in the mind but can never absolutely define, as one can experience in memory a melody or the summer perfume of a garden.' The generalization may be too sweeping. There are other more dynamic kinds of fiction whose effect has nothing to do with perfumes, cadences, or melodies. But within the limits of her own nature, Willa Cather excels in the kind of fiction which she is here describing.

MARGARET FAIRLEY

THE ODYSSEY OF A YEGG

ALEXANDERPLATZ, BERLIN: The Story of Franz Biberkopf, by Alfred Döblin; translated into the American by Eugene Jolas (Viking Press—Irwin & Gordon; two volumes boxed; pp. 635; \$5.00).

NOW that the sound and fury provoked by the experiments of Miss Gertrude Stein and James Joyce have been reduced to the timid bleatings of a few ageing professors, creative writers are beginning to apply the theories of these two pioneers of the prose style of the future. For the writings of Miss Stein and Mr. Joyce, like the painting of the cubists and the musical compositions of the ultra moderns, can only be regarded as samples of a new technique, deliberately exaggerated to impress on the minds of creative disciples the doctrine which the master wishes to teach. Dr. Döblin's new novel shows what can be done by a judicious adaptation in the realm of fiction of Joyce's stream of consciousness technique, and Miss Stein's cult of sound for its own sake.

It would require a long article to write a fair criticism of the two volumes that tell the story of Franz Biberkopf; no book review can do justice to Döblin's work. *Alexanderplatz* is a gigantic epic, not of Franz Biberkopf, nor even of the Berlin underworld, but of the soul of the common man and of life in the modern metropolis. The hero of the novel is a Berlin gangster and his story is a typical tale of crime and punishment, so popular in this age of low-browism. But this Edgar Wallace plot is merely the rough scaffolding which supports a tremendous structure: the profound study of the mental life of the proletariat in the twentieth century—a proletariat which has been moulded by such forces as war, industrialism, democracy and the popular press.

It is not merely an excellent story that Herr Döblin has written. *Alexanderplatz* is a history

of German literature in the last fifty years. The novel is predominantly naturalistic in technique—with its detailed, scientific reproduction of *milieu*, its love of description, its preoccupation with the ugly and sordid, its setting in an industrial cosmopolis. But it is as different from the purely naturalistic novel of 1880 as the Europe of today is different from that of fifty years ago. For in the last half-century German literature has undergone many influences, and each of these has left its impress on the writing of the present day. What makes *Alexanderplatz* so magnificent a creation is the fact that Döblin has escaped the heaviness and monotony of naturalism by frequent excursions into expressionism with its cult of brevity and symbolic utterance. He is not satisfied to report only his sense impressions, but probes into the souls of his characters; lays bare their most intimate thoughts and emotions, their aspirations and disappointments, the grandeur and misery of their existence.

Döblin's genius as a word-artist can only be grasped by reading aloud many sections of *Alexanderplatz*. Here, for instance, is a passage which gives the reader an idea of the author's technique and of his extraordinary skill in handling words:—

Room No. 60, Labour Court, refreshment room, a rather small room with a bar, quick coffee boiler, the bill-of-fare reads: Lunch: rice soup, roulade of beef (roll that r) 1 mark. A stout young gentleman wearing horn-rimmed glasses is sitting in a chair, eating his lunch. You look at him and you establish the fact that he has a steaming plate of roulade of beef, gravy, and potatoes standing in front of him, and is about to gulp them all down, one after the other. His eyes roam back and forth across the plate, though nobody is trying to take anything away from him, there's nobody near him, he's sitting all alone at his table, and he's worried, he cuts up and mashes his fodder, and quickly shoves it into his mouth, bit by bit, bit by bit, by bit, and as he works one bit in, one out, one in, one out, as he cuts, bolts, and gulps, smacks, sniffs, and stodges, his eyes examine, his eyes observe, the ever-diminishing remnant upon the plate, watching it on all sides like two snappish dogs, and estimating its quantity. Another bit in, another out. Period.

Of the minor innovations introduced into *Alexanderplatz*, perhaps the most interesting is the use of the leitmotif. A small paragraph suggesting a certain mood or idea recurs from time to time. For example, before a section dealing with death, the following little rhyme usually appears:—

There is a mower, death yclept, has power which the Lord
has kept.
When he gins his knife to whet, keener it grows and
keener yet.

The effect of half a dozen such leitmotifs running through the book is extraordinarily impressive.

Mr. Jolas' translation is, like the work itself, magnificent. It was a happy idea to render the original into American slang rather than Mayfair English; and the translator has produced a masterpiece. The publishers also deserve great praise for the craftsmanship of the two volumes. The printing is beautiful, the title page most tasteful, and the cover design notable for that bare simplicity which is the keynote of modern German

art and which expresses so well the spirit of the twentieth century.

Whether *Alexanderplatz* is, as its publishers claim, 'one of the really important books in our generation,' it is unsafe for anyone but a publisher to say. But it is certainly a very impressive work, which should afford the cultivated reader a few evenings of great delight, and which deserves not only to be read, but studied.

H. STEINHAEUER

STILL SMALL VOICES

OPEN HOUSE, Edited by William Arthur Deacon and Wilfred Reeves (Graphic Publishers; pp. 319; \$3.00).

THIS is a book to be dealt with in kindness. Whatever may be said of its execution—and much might be said on both sides—the idea behind it is wholly admirable. A group of men, interested in art and in ideas, and somewhat critical of certain features of their social environment, found themselves desirous of expressing that criticism publicly. But vehicles for criticism of any kind are decidedly limited in Canada. From a realization of this arose the idea of creating a vehicle in the form of a symposium on various features of Canadian life. This volume is the result.

An effort such as this is all to the good. There is no feature of our national life so persistent, so reckless of reality, or pursued with such unscrupulous violence, as the determination to suppress all tendency to self-criticism under a swelling paean of blah. Anyone who cares two hoots about the integrity of Canadian life and culture must view with alarm the lengths to which this tendency is being carried of late. Our whole philosophy of existence seems to be based on a complete disregard for obvious facts and the reiteration *ad nauseam* of a stereotyped series of palpable untruths. It is not good enough. If our newborn nationhood is to possess any vigor or worth, it must stand up to facts. Instead, it is at present being swaddled in a large damp blanket of platitudes, catchwords, and plain downright lies. The result is certain to be pernicious anaemia.

Under such circumstances there can be nothing but welcome for any note of protest. THE CANADIAN FORUM has endeavoured to keep such a note alive, but has often felt itself to be a voice crying in the wilderness. It is always encouraging to find other still small voices raised on the same general themes.

Moreover, the present volume is free from that querulous superiority of adolescence that too often characterize the aspirant critic of present conditions. Its tone is mature, and it is seasoned with a welcome amount of humour. The essays raise many topics which are vital and fundamental. The idealization of war; the catchwords of imperialism; the worship of financial success; a prudishness that makes Victorianism seem daring and abandoned—these cherished anachronisms are a fit mark for the iconoclast, even if his aim is sometimes not of the best.

Like every symposium, this one has its ups and downs. The tone of the essays ranges from soothing complacency to petulant extravagance, with all shades in between. But there is much sound sense and much vigorous writing throughout the book. Not much of it is new, but a great deal of it is interesting, and most of it will do no harm for being said.

One criticism, perhaps, is that many of the subjects are attacked on secondary points. The writers do not always seem to have grasped the central aspect of their themes, and many of their objections on certain matters, while not necessarily unsound, are not always the chief objections which should be stressed. This springs no doubt from the lack of a complete critical view embracing the whole basis of our national life. A given writer may have become deeply concerned over one particular feature without having worked out its full underlying implications. The result is that the informative passages are apt to be better than the critical ones. But it is, in the end, the attempt at criticism that makes one welcome this book. It is not a great book, but it is an interesting one. One hopes that its comparative mildness is merely the prelude to other and more outspoken works for the good of our souls.

EDGAR MCINNIS

RELIGIOUS OBSESSIONS

HOLY MAN, by J. Harvey Hall (Allen & Unwin; pp. 320; \$2.00).

EBENEZER WALKS WITH GOD, by George Baker (Scholaris Press; pp. 285; 7/6).

THE modern novelist realizes to the full the advantage of a catchy title; only occasionally does the novel fulfil the promise of its name. Here are two books as unusual in conception as in title. Both Mr. Hall and Mr. Baker have explored the possibilities of religious fanaticism as material for fiction. *Holy Man* deals with the effect of religious obsession upon a young man, *Ebenezer Walks With God* upon an old one.

Holy Man tells of a young Scottish student of theology who finds himself suddenly possessed of a gift of healing which he declares 'comes from God.' With many cures to his credit he returns to his home in a remote Highland village prepared to devote himself and his gift to the service of his own people. They receive him with mixed feelings, pride in his achievements tempered by a shrewd scepticism as to their divine origin, an attitude disturbing to the vanity of the young man who misses the enthusiastic reception which he considers his due. Old associations bear in upon a new idealism; practical considerations conspire to drag him down from the spiritual plane upon which he seeks to live. Human relationships interfere with his career as holy man—he must sacrifice one or the other. He seeks to evade the issue, but the problem is rendered acute by the presence of his former sweetheart; he desires her, but she now represents for him the world, the flesh and the devil, for when she enters his thoughts the healing power vanishes. Only after a near

tragedy does the human love overcome an asceticism which is akin to egotism. With that victory the book ends, but one feels that the solution is only a temporary one: the struggle must be renewed with small chance of happiness for the participants.

Holy Man is a readable book—and a disappointing one. The idea is excellent, the development of it somehow unsatisfactory. The author never quite succeeds in coming to grips with the chief characters, showing a fatal tendency to sentimentalize that of Janet and her part in the story, when the interest might better have been focussed upon the holy man himself. Janet is, as she says frequently, 'only a simple country lass'; she makes no appeal save to the reader's pity, and pathos quickly becomes wearisome. The atmosphere of superstition which is woven about her appears too flagrantly a device to eke out a very thin character. Far more satisfactory are the minor characters. The author has a faculty for sketching Scottish types and an insight into Scottish character, with its mixture of commonsense, sentiment, superstition, and somewhat grim humour.

A far more satisfying book is *Ebenezer Walks With God*. Ebenezer and his wife Elizabeth are an elderly, childless couple, devout members of a narrowly Calvinistic religious sect. Into their settled lives comes the orphaned baby, Paul, whom, as the only relatives, they adopt. Elizabeth, her desire for a child at last satisfied, devotes herself wholly to him, to the neglect and consuming jealousy of Ebenezer. An illness which the latter undergoes alters the whole situation. He comes back to life with the obsession that he is Joseph the Carpenter, Elizabeth Mary the Virgin, and the boy Paul Jesus the Son of God. Gradually he and Elizabeth fade out of the picture, but he retains the conviction that Paul is the Christ, reborn. Dazed and exultant over his secret, Ebenezer watches the boy's every movement, keeping a journal to be given to the world when the truth is revealed. Extracts from this journal form part of the novel. His delusion brings Ebenezer to a fuller life than he has yet known; he is transformed into a kindlier, more human person. Elizabeth, on the contrary, remains rigid and disapproving. The impossibility of reconciling disparate points of view leads to quarrels and separation. Ebenezer and the boy start a new life on their own, assisted by an amiable Cockney, Miss Anne Arrison, who advises her protégé to 'lam' his obstreperous spouse.

So far so good. Mr. Baker handles his Ebenezer with sympathy and insight, while a saving objectivity and sense of humour save the story from becoming ridiculous. The setting in the thronging life of London helps to make all things credible, Miss Anne Arrison providing a touch of real comedy. The author makes the mistake of removing his characters to the country, where they at once appear forced and artificial. Ebenezer becomes the apostle of sweetness and light in contrast to the narrow Puritanism of Elizabeth and a certain Daniel Dean. With a somewhat mawkish sentimentality he and Miss Arrison, a hop-picker for the nonce, are portrayed

as the pure in heart in a sort of childish innocence which transcends the conventions. Much is made of a scene in which the lady, somewhat scantily clad, expounds to Ebenezer her simple philosophy, which he finds to be sounder than his own. The incident causes a scandal, complete rupture with Elizabeth, and Ebenezer's defection to the hop-pickers, whom he speedily finds to possess hearts of gold, and a tolerant sympathy with his dreams. Among them he dies, secure in his belief that Paul is the Son of God.

It is a pity that a really unusual novel should be so marred by loss of perspective. As long as the author retains his sense of humour with regard to Ebenezer all is well, it is when he begins to take him seriously that the whole business verges on the farcical, while Miss Arrison becomes a mere burlesque. The falling-off, however, is not so serious as to prevent the book from being very good reading; it merely fails to maintain its standard. In its early stages it is excellent, the transformation of Ebenezer drawn with that 'humour and insight' quoted by the publishers in connection with an earlier novel by the same author.

M. A. CAMPBELL

RACE CONSCIOUSNESS

THE BOOK OF AMERICAN NEGRO POETRY, edited by James Weldon Johnson (Harcourt, Brace—George J. McLeod; pp. xii, 300; \$2.50).

IN his Foreword to *Ol' Man Adam an His Children*, that remarkable collection upon which Mark Connelly based his play, *The Green Pastures*, Roark Bradford divides the black race in America into three general groups: the 'nigger,' the 'coloured person' and the Negro. Most people are familiar only with the 'nigger' of this classification. It is he who supplied the material for the minstrel shows; who is the romantic character of the Old South; who is the hero of the crap-shooting, chicken-stealing, melon-eating, horse-loving tradition. He contributes the characters for the nigger funny story. He is a comic, not a tragic figure. If he is race-conscious, as of course he is, it is in that repulsive, mysterious, physical sense that the author of *Sweet Man* tried to analyze.

To what extent the 'nigger' as thus defined corresponds to reality, how far he is the creation of white imagination, it is not my present purpose to discuss. It is enough that he represents for most non-Southerners the black race in America.

But there is another black American, perhaps the most poignantly tragic figure on this continent today, and it is he who is revealed to some extent in the anthology before us. The tragedy is bound up with the race-consciousness which, if this anthology is truly representative, and if the preface speaks the mind of the group, was never stronger than in these days since the Great War, and flames fiercest in the best of the Negro writing. The strength of this expression in recent poetry is most strikingly made evident by a comparison of the contents of the present revised anthology with those of the original one, published in 1922.

LAST AND FIRST MEN

By W. Olaf Stapledon

The story opens with recognizable factors in the possible history of the future, the race terminating, with the Americanization of the planet. The second race of men is vastly different from our own; in one age the moon explodes and the people are forced to seek refuge in Venus. In the concluding chapters one of the Last Men, magically projects his mental equipment back to our days, and bids us take warning from his story.....\$2.50

The Corn King and the Spring Queen

By Naomi Mitchison

This book is history and philosophy and adventure. It tells of two very different civilizations: Marob in Scythia and Sparta, in the third century B.C. In Marob is vitality of young growth and of rebirth, symbolized in the orgies of Plowing Eve, and binding the people together in a passionate egotistical community of purpose. In Sparta disillusion and tiredness and the clash of intellectualized philosophies\$3.50

THOMAS NELSON
& SONS, LIMITED

TORONTO 2

The most powerful voice is that of Claude McKay. Take his sonnet, *The Lynching*:—

His spirit in smoke ascended to high heaven.
His father, by the cruelest way of pain,
Had bidden him to his bosom once again;
The awful sin remained still unforgiven.
All night a bright and solitary star
(Perchance the one that ever guided him,
Yet gave him up at last to Fate's wild whim)
Hung pitifully o'er the swinging char.
Day dawned, and soon the mixed crowds came to view
The ghastly body swaying in the sun:
The women thronged to look, but never a one
Showed sorrow in her eyes of steely blue;
And little lads, lynchers that were to be,
Danced round the dreadful thing in fiendish glee.

Countee Cullen, better known to most people, shows more frequently irony rather than tragedy, and the tragedy often lightens to pathos. His fret at racial handicap in a white civilization results in a puzzled questioning of life:—

Yet do I marvel at this curious thing:
To make a poet black, and bid him sing:

More than once we are given such a stirring roll-call of achievement as in Frank Horne's 'Nigger':—

Little Black boy
Chased down the street—
'Nigger, nigger never die,
Black face an' shiny eye,
Nigger . . . nigger . . . nigger . . .'

Hannibal . . . Hannibal
Bangin' through the Alps
Licked the proud Romans,
Ran home with their scalps—
'Nigger . . . nigger . . . nigger . . .'

Othello . . . black man
Mighty in war
Listened to Iago,
Called his wife a whore—
'Nigger . . . nigger . . . nigger . . .'

* * *

Toussaint . . . Toussaint
Made the French flee,
Fought like a demon,
Set his people free—
'Nigger . . . nigger . . . nigger . . .'

Jesus . . . Jesus
Son of the Lord
—Spit in his face
—Nail him on a board,
'Nigger . . . nigger . . . nigger . . .'

Little Black boy
Runs down the street—
'Nigger, nigger never die,
Black face an' shiny eye,
Nigger . . . nigger . . .'

Even a poet like Waring Cuney, whose work seems to be free of race conflict, reveals suggestions of it:—

She does not know
Her beauty,
She thinks her brown body
Has no glory.

If she could dance
Naked,
Under palm trees
And see her image in the river
She would know.

But there are no palm trees
On the street,
And dish water gives back no images.

There is not a great deal of religious poetry in the collection, a fact which may surprise many who associate the Negro chiefly with the Spirituals. The best of the religious poems is James Weldon Johnson's own 'Creation.' Waring Cuney has contributed several delightful little religious fragments, which one is tempted to quote.

Nor is there much of the sentimental dialect verse that Dunbar popularized, and that has been so widely imitated by white writers. Dunbar himself is of course represented, and other dialect writers as well. In the work of the recent Negro poets, however, there is more of the sophisticated town language of the Blues, a speech which lends itself well to the hard, glittering realism of much modern writing. But by far the majority of the pieces are written in conventional English.

Whether or not there is a real affinity between the broken rhythms of syncopated music and *vers libre*, the fact remains that the Negroes who have used it—and they have shrunk from few modes of experimentation—have achieved some remarkable results. Apparently, however, the most popular form, and the one in which some of the finest and most striking poems of this anthology have been written, is the sonnet.

Put this collection, with its excellent prefaces alongside some four or five other writings—*Mamba's Daughters*, *The Green Pastures*, *Rainbow Round My Shoulder*, the Foreword to *Ol' Man Adam an' His Chillun*, *Home to Harlem*, *God's Trombones*—and you will probably find yourself with a changed, but possibly truer picture of the Negro in America.

J. D. ROBINS

AN INTUITIVE PHILOSOPHER

COLERIDGE AS PHILOSOPHER, by J. H. Muirhead (Allen & Unwin; pp. 287; 12/6).

THE fascination exercised by Coleridge as a poet was for a long time his only serious claim to attention. The general reader and the student of English literature were both satisfied when they surrendered themselves to the peculiar charms of the *Ancient Mariner* or *Xanadu*. Mr. Green, of course, erected a monument to the *Spiritual Philosophy* of Coleridge, but it did not attract much attention. Only a few readers cared to trace through the *Biographia Literaria* the outline of a philosophy which definitely rejected the principles of mechanism as taught in the eighteenth century and much less definitely hinted at a metaphysic made in Germany. For nearly a century Coleridge was literature and nothing else; recently new interests seem to have entered the field. We may refer in passing to the view of Coleridge as a *Divine Somnambulist* and to that study of the *Road to Xanadu* which attacks the

problem psychologically and seems indirectly to refute the efforts of Coleridge himself to disprove the theory of association of ideas. These books are not in our present scope, for we are concerned with the more prosaic part of Coleridge's work. Here we find that research in unpublished manuscripts has justified a treatise entitled *Coleridge on Logic and Learning* (Alice D. Snyder); that Joseph Needham has found reasons for writing on *S. T. Coleridge as a Philosophic Biologist*; that A. E. Cobban in his book on *Edmund Burke* gives thirty pages to 'The Political Philosophy of Coleridge' as a part of the 'revolt against the eighteenth century'; and, finally, that Professor Muirhead has needed two hundred and fifty pages to tell us all we ought to know about Coleridge as a thinker.

To appreciate Muirhead's point of view it is necessary to remember that this book is really an outgrowth of his other book *The Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Philosophy*. It is not the whole truth to say that Coleridge was indebted to the German philosophers for his inspiration; it is difficult to discover whether he ever grasped the meaning of Kant and it is possible to doubt whether he knew the German language well enough to understand the lectures he heard. In any case the original source of his own ideas, and perhaps of the German philosophy so far as he knew it, could be found in the writings of Jakob Boehme (or Behmen) and earlier still in Proclus or Plotinus, while the tradition which Muirhead was studying as a whole persisted through Cudworth and the eighteenth century idealists down to Coleridge's own time. In a word, Platonic idealism never was extinguished by empiricism and British philosophy never was entirely dominated by the views of Locke and Hume.

Professor Muirhead has now given us what must be for some time the final estimate of Coleridge as philosopher. His work is more thorough and complete than any earlier work could be, partly because of the labour which others have devoted to parts of this field, partly because his own ability to combine sympathy with critical acuteness is hardly to be matched. Some have no patience with the vapours which obscure Coleridge's meaning; others offer a blind worship because they hold that what is unintelligible must necessarily be profound. Coleridge has suffered from enemies and from friends alternately and very equally. But Muirhead has dealt with him both comprehensively and fairly. After an excellent account of his philosophical development there are chapters on Logic, Metaphysics, Philosophy of Nature, Moral Philosophy, Political Philosophy, Theory of Fine Art, and Philosophy of Religion. The plan looks very systematic, and we are much indebted to the author for the skill with which he has arranged all this material. But Coleridge was an intuitive philosopher by nature; his ideas came to him like sunlight through drifting clouds and no amount of arranging can make him a systematic philosopher nor redeem him from his own incoherence. Yet it is astonishing how vital his ideas often are and how

¶ A few years ago the U.S.S.R.—which we still call Russia — hadn't wheat enough for her own needs.

¶ Indeed, the day is not so long distant when the charity of other countries saved millions of Russians from starvation.

¶ Then she started her programme of collective farming—

¶ And in 1930 produced considerably more than *One Billion Bushels* of wheat.

¶ And Russia came back again into the wheat markets of the world as a serious competitor.

¶ The dramatic story of this amazing success—which was not without its failures—is told by Miss Anna Strong, who has lived for nine years in Russia, and is the editor of the only paper published in English in that country.

¶ Miss Strong visited collective farms of all sizes and conditions from the Ukraine to Siberia, and talked with men and women — some satisfied, others dissatisfied with the working out of the Communist Party's plan of collectivization of farms.

¶ She tells a vivid and illuminating story of life on the inside in Russia in her book, *"The Soviets Conquer Wheat."*

¶ This book is published in Canada by McClelland & Stewart, Limited, Toronto, and may be procured through any bookseller (\$2.75). If your dealer cannot supply it, write to the publishers.

surely he can demolish a view which is more clear than profound. As a critic of literature and aesthetic taste Coleridge occupied a position more secure than that of the academic philosophers; he was a craftsman as well as a critic. As an exponent of pure philosophy he did little more than express a tendency, exploiting his sentiments where his knowledge of the subject failed him. But the most astonishing part is the political philosophy. Now that Dicey has taught us to treat Wordsworth's political thought with respect it is not so hard to consider Coleridge seriously, and when we have sufficiently discarded the natural prejudices of practical men we begin to perceive that Coleridge had arrived by his own peculiar route at the idea of community and had a sense for the intangible value of that national spirit which really dominates the course of political evolution. This bears some resemblance to the misnamed organic theory of the State, but in missing the false analogy of the body politic Coleridge struck the far more important idea of the national life and national consciousness.

G. S. BRETT

NATURE AND KNOWLEDGE

POETRY IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND, by Jean Stewart (Hogarth Press; pp. 160; 3/6).

ONE hundred and fifty pages are rather restricted limits for so comprehensive a subject as the development of the idea of poetry in England and France from the Renaissance to the present day, but Miss Stewart triumphs over the disadvantage of lack of space by a great precision and vigour in both thought and style as well as by a bold because simple acceptance of the essential order imposed upon her by her subject. While many contemporary would-be historians of literature haggle childishly over the use of the words *romantic* and *classical* because they neither know the meaning of these words nor understand their profound significance in the pendulum-swing of modern letters, Miss Stewart knows both their meaning and significance and finds an unerring way through the changes of the centuries by their aid. Her sound sense, sound taste, and sound discipline make her rather classical than romantic in her criticism but she is not entirely proof against the insidious lure of the Gothic, metaphysical fleshpots. Or perhaps she is merely throwing a sop to the Gothic Cerberus in the shape of a London audience. For instance: 'The cry ("Moderns, beware!") has been heard so often since Pope's time that it arouses in us only irritation against such narrow-minded timidity; yet his counsel of prudence was, perhaps, the wisest.' Or again, referring to the pullulating poetic theories in France during the last fifty years in comparison with English sterility: 'Scepticism sometimes assails the English reader, who wonders, weary of intellectual strife, whether Ronsard with his genius and his commonplace doctrines, was not worth all these wild-goose-chasers.' Thus do nature and knowledge struggle in Miss Stewart's mind.

If the author's style and historical sense save her from many a pitfall of prolixity and pedantry so do the injustices of her personal preferences or of her authorities. This makes her book all the more challenging to those who know something of the subject and all the more misleading to the ignorant. Much more space is given to the discussion of the French side of the question than to the English on the assumption that the reader, being an Englishman, is but ill-acquainted with French poetry. The assumption is justified undoubtedly on every count, but such an assumption involves the inference that the author will be all the more fastidiously correct in the presentation of the Gallic argument. And when we read her on Racine we are ready to accept her as the second person in the British isles qualified to speak about the poetry of France. But be reassured. Miss Stewart's generous condemnations and sparing praises are partly just her generous nationalism. For her, as for the rest of us, English poetry is autochthonous as well as autonomous, and the Hebrew-Protestant idea of poetry is the only just idea. By that idea shall all poetry be judged. One suspects, finally, that Miss Stewart, unlike Mr. Lytton Strachey, is grateful to Racine for *Athalie* rather than for *Bérénice*. Then you may be sure that Miss Stewart will say that 'Great poetry is rare in France', that English poets adopted Boileau's principles 'not from any spirit of subservience', which is meaningless, and that 'we need not despair' because we have produced no great poetry for fifty years. Miss Stewart's authorities have misled her from time to time as well. Does she not know that Spenser was not more devoted to music than was Ronsard? Was Malherbe not something more than a 'malicious and spiteful schoolmaster'? Was he not a poet? Malherbe gave to France a poetry more Christian, more national, more real, more intense than it had known for more than a century.

Such are some of the reservations we would make in regard to this handbook. These concern an understandable national sensitiveness and judgments on individual poets. There is not to be found in English a more just or a more readable presentation of the main ideas which underlie the movement of modern poetry.

J. S. WILL



AN ECONOMIC BURLESQUE

IN DEFENCE OF CAPITALISM, by Adolf Weber.
Translated by H. J. Stenning (Allen & Unwin; pp. 128; 4/6).

THIS book, an expansion of lectures delivered to the Economic Advisory Committee of the Bavarian People's Party, was presumably intended to serve as comfortable words for the German middle class. Most of it, however, could equally well have come from the propaganda department of the Third International, with the sub-title, 'A Confession of Intellectual Bankruptcy,' or 'An Essay in Burlesque.' For Dr. Weber has hardly done more than parade before us, with ludicrous solemnity, all the most demonstrably false doctrines of the economics of 1830. It is an amazing achievement; but is it a defence of capitalism?

Take, for example, the staggering assertion on p. 27 that 'capital is congealed labour.' If this is true, how can we escape the whole Marxian analysis? Or consider the theory of wages set forth on pp. 75-76. According to Dr. Weber higher wages for any group of workers mean, unless accompanied by greater productivity, either higher prices, and hence lower real wages for other workers; or less saving, less capital, fewer opportunities for employment. 'Other things remaining equal, one group of workers can only improve its position at the expense of other groups of workers.' Like the classical economists, Dr. Weber is obsessed with the necessity of saving, saving to the utmost, saving at all costs, and in all circumstances. The ideal, apparently, is a worker who needs neither food, clothing, nor shelter; who consumes nothing, but cheerfully allows the whole product of industry—except, of course, what is needed to maintain his employer—to be saved. In this imperfect world we can hardly hope quite to reach this goal, but the worker must be made to understand that the lower his wages the more saving and hence the more employment there will be, and the better off he will be.

After this one is prepared for almost any naiveté, any piece of unconscious irony. And Dr. Weber does not disappoint us. On p. 63 he observes, *à propos* of crises, 'We have transformed the sharp curves in the evolution of our economy into a smooth ripple.' What 'our economy' is we discover on pp. 28 and 32: 'Everyone has the right to decide for himself where and how he shall be engaged . . . Capital risks are borne not by the community but by the individual. The business man who squanders his capital is punished with the loss of his property and social position. Often enough he cannot avoid tumbling down many rungs of the social ladder. . . . Competition sooner or later ruthlessly weeds out the inefficient among the directors of industry.'

This is the stuff to give the troops! Are you unemployed? The world is before you; you are free to choose what occupation you will. Has the industry in which you work gone bankrupt? Take comfort; your late employer may perhaps no longer be asked out to dinner. Are you a British

or American coal miner? Tighten your belt for another decade or so and remember that sooner or later competition will weed out the inefficient among those who control your industry.

Space does not permit further quotations; but the inquisitive reader with a taste for economic nonsense will find plenty more of it in Dr. Weber's pages. Those to whom the nonsense is not obvious might consult the works of such unimpeachably capitalist economists as Cassel, Cannan, Keynes, Henderson, and Pigou—a prescription which Dr. Weber himself could take with advantage.

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SHORT NOTICES

THE LETTERS OF JOHN KEATS, edited by Maurice Buxton Forman (Oxford University Press; 2 volumes; pp. lv, 607; \$10.75).

STUDIES IN KEATS, by T. Middleton Murry (Oxford University Press; pp. 124; \$2.25).

Critics and investigators have been extraordinarily busy with Keats since the war; and with Mr. Middleton Murry's recent edition of his poems and Mr. Maurice Buxton Forman's edition of his letters the general reader of Keats can profit very largely from the devoted work of the specialists. 'The present collection' says the editor 'is based on the latest published work of my father, supplemented by the fruits of his subsequent research as well as from other sources.' Since 1901 when Harry Buxton Forman brought out his edition of the Letters, thirteen new pieces have come into view; and the growing knowledge of Keats together with the extraordinary vigilance of the present editor have enabled him to make many minor but important corrections and additions to his father's work. The letters have been scattered among scores of libraries and private collections; and Mr. Maurice Buxton Forman had the happy thought of indicating in his Table of Contents just where these letters now are. It is impossible to speak too warmly of his achievement; and when one remembers that while he was engaged in it, his place of residence was Pretoria, a Canadian must blush for the inertia of Canadian scholars.

It is well-known that neither in theory nor in practice did Keats set much store by the poetry of mere self-revelation. Where his poetry is intimately personal, as in *Sleep and Poetry*, it is of indifferent aesthetic value. For the man Keats, as Matthew Arnold perceived, one must go to the Letters. And, after the Letters, to Mr. Murry's *Keats and Shakespeare*, a book beyond praise and blame. The *Studies in Keats*, Mr. Murry tells us, 'were designed to fill gaps in *Keats and Shakespeare*. Almost certainly he would have done better to incorporate them in a revised edition of the other book. As it is they are, most of them, too slight in substance, too extensive for their matter. And in one at least of them Mr. Murry did not adequately review his text before writing. But whatever Mr. Murry writes on Keats is a gift not to be scorned—if only he

would write more about Keats whom he so profoundly understands, and less about Lawrence whom he does not understand at all!

The three volumes under review are uniform with Mr. Murry's *Keats and Shakespeare*. Is it too much to hope that the Oxford University Press will give us an edition of the Poems in the same excellent format?

E. K. B.

TEXT-BOOK OF LOGIC, by A. Wolf (Allen & Unwin; pp. 407; 10/-).

In this age of paradoxes it is perhaps fitting that the business depression should be relieved by a boom in logic. At any rate it has happened. Statistics (which is our way of saying that we have counted the specimens) show that Harvard has put out one, namely Professor Eaton's *General Logic*; Cornell is responsible for a *Logic of Science* by Professor Smart; London, England, accounts for the most ambitious achievement, too modestly called *A Modern Introduction to Logic*, by Miss Susan Stebbing, and also for the smaller but very competent book which provides the excuse for these remarks. Several others will be left unmentioned, but they also exist. The fact is that logic has for some time been undergoing repairs. Before and since Messrs. Russell and Whitehead undertook to make mathematics a branch of logic, there have been various amendments to the Aristotelian logic proposed and elaborated. But the work of Russell and Whitehead is the heaven which has most affected the whole lump. All the logics we have mentioned bear witness to this, more or less. It is not appropriate to the present occasion to elaborate this point further. We remark only that Professor Wolf has for a long time contributed to the movement which makes scientific method the basis of logical theory, and this book is a continuation of that policy.

This is essentially a text-book. It is relatively small and will serve as a good beginner's text; it introduces such topics as circumstantial evidence and the evolutionary method, in addition to the usual doctrines of induction and deduction; it treats the standard topics in a fresh and interesting way, without attempting that kind of symbolic logic which is beyond the average student and is almost an independent branch of science. In short it is a good piece of work which can be recommended

to all who look for an introduction to logic or are destined to lead others on the path of right reasoning.

G. S. B.

FRENCH MERCANTILIST DOCTRINES BEFORE COLBERT, by Charles Woolsey Cole (Richard R. Smith; pp. xiv, 243; \$2.50).

This might have been called an 'Outline of Mercantilism.' It gathers up significant fragments from Laffemas, Montchretien, and a host of lesser writers. Quotations furnish most of the evidence with a useful, if somewhat too convincing, monotony. While the work gives some understanding of Mercantilism in the light of the times, almost succeeding where it did not try, that can only be done, of course, in a much more extensive history of the industry and commerce of the period. The author stresses the difference between the legislation of Mercantilism, which was provincial or national in scope, and the municipal trade legislation and exercise of local monopolies which belong to the earlier period of 'town economy.' That Bullionism was a perversion of Mercantilism, due to the abnormal flow of gold into Spain and the resulting scramble for it by surrounding nations, is also emphasized. Bullionism becomes an attempt to meet an emergency, rather than a piece of economic philosophy. While the Mercantilists recognized the economic advantage of more or less free trade within the nation, and thus made an advance beyond the ideas of the burghers who saw no further than their city walls, the quotations included with the text demonstrate that Mercantilist theory, especially that of Laffemas, disregarded the training of young men for the business enterprise which was being encouraged, and stupidly neglected transportation. In the streets, Frenchmen lamented the foreign invasion of peripatetic bankers and merchants; returning to their homes, they advised their sons to avoid soiling their hands with trade.

The silk raising episode, that grandiose plan of the Commission of Commerce for extension of silk raising on a national scale, and the subsequent failure, stands like a 'stop' sign for all makers of national plans.

The close relation between tariff protection and the abnormal trade conditions following a war is once more emphasized. Also, it is shown that many of the restrictions upon trade applied only to luxury goods from the Near East, whose consump-

tion the theorists, if not the government, wanted to discourage in the interests of the national savings and the supply of coinage. Restrictions upon the mobility of labor found a good excuse in the unreliability of a large floating population, especially of traders, who had no stake in the country and no reputation to maintain. Like the itinerant stock salesman and gospel preacher of today, they were likely to leave behind them bad wares or unpaid bills. This much at least should be said for the Mercantilism before Colbert—it had some theoretical and statesmanlike basis, and was more national in its scope than any 'national' policy. If our evangelical protectionists would study Doctor Cole's book, they might even find excuses for a tariff on fresh air. At least they would discover that they have been giving quite the wrong arguments for the only sound parts of their policy.

D. C. MACG.

LUTHER AND THE REFORMATION IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN RESEARCH, by Heinrich Boehmer. Translated by E. S. G. Potter (G. Bell-Clarke, Irwin; pp. 380; \$4.75).

If scholarly investigation and an apparently honest endeavour to get at the facts can ever give us now a true picture of Martin Luther, we are likely to have it here in this work of Dr. Boehmer's. It can scarcely, indeed, be said to be the last word on the subject, for it is only an English translation of the fifth German edition of 1918 of the author's *Luther im Lichte der neueren Forschung* of 1904, an edition, however, greatly enlarged and considerably re-written. Up to that time Dr. Boehmer had covered all the available Luther material, and, armed with an amazing amount of knowledge, he sets out to demolish the derogatory conceptions of Catholic writers and to present a Luther worthy of the honour that has always been accorded to him in Protestantism. Dr. Boehmer is, of course, a Protestant, and the Luther that emerges at the end is a completely justified, if not an entirely blameless figure. But there can be no quarrel with the author's contention that the Luther problem can only be solved by one who is himself 'capable of entering into the psychological attitude which Luther demands,' and of understanding the spiritual power which made him what he was—his piety and his religion. Certainly Dr. Boehmer is well equipped in this particular, as

is seen in his careful study of the evolution of the Reformer and in his analysis of the forces at work in Luther's later years. Yet his criticism of Luther's detractors is well-based on historical data, and it is his contribution in this field that makes his book of first rate importance to students not only of Luther but also of the Reformation movement in general. It is worth noting here that Dr. Boehmer casts doubt on all pictorial representations of Luther, and admits that 'we no longer know *exactly* what Luther was like.' One of the notes, also, in the Appendix, deals with all extant Luther portraits.

F. J. M.

SOCIAL CONTROL OF SEX EXPRESSION, by Geoffrey May (Allen and Unwin; pp. xi, 245; 12/6).

This is a historical account of the efforts of Church and State to check and control voluntary sex relations, i.e., where there is no compulsion between the individuals concerned. It thus gives a historical background which should not be ignored when judging the present or planning the future. After a brief account of sex taboos among primitive peoples, where, as is well-known, they are especially severe—though those who consider social restrictions to be the fine flower of civilization would fain ignore the fact—the author passes on to the ancient Hebrews and early Christians. The main part of the book, however, is concerned with the Anglo-Saxon world, especially from the seventh to the seventeenth century. In that period still flourished the ascetics, those blasphemers against nature who fathered upon the church that colossal aberration in regard to sex from which it is not yet entirely free. This wholesale condemnation of sexual life inevitably led to all kinds of excesses among both clergy and laity, and on the other hand to violent repression and penances before which the other sins paled into insignificance. The last few chapters are devoted to American state laws on the subject, which are traced back to the mediaeval ecclesiastical courts, and are proved to be least effective where they are most severe.

G. M. A. G.

COMPANY I HAVE KEPT, by Henry S. Salt (Allen & Unwin; pp. 218; 10/-).

Mr. Salt, having more than fulfilled his three score years and ten, is able to look back over a long period

in which he was fortunate, among other things, for the number and diversity of his acquaintances. His participation in the struggle against oppression, whether of man or bird or beast, brought him into close contact with most of the great 'cranks' of the period—contact which ripened many times into intimate friendship. He was the familiar of such men as Shaw, Edward Carpenter, W. H. Hudson, Clarence Darrow, Lord Olivier, and a host of others, and he has crossed swords with such stout reactionaries as Belloc and Chesterton. In the present book Mr. Salt turns to speak with grace and humour, and often with deep feeling, of this varied company. Inevitably he includes some whom he never saw in the flesh—Shelley, Thoreau, Wordsworth, Coleridge—but whose influence on him was as potent as that of living men. His touch is always light and sure, and it is therefore the greater pity that the book is as brief as it is and that several chapters are hurried and superficial. The best sketch, partly because the longest, is that of Hudson, but a few others are written of with an illuminating reality. Gentleness and sincerity are such a rare combination nowadays that one could have listened to much more if Mr. Salt had felt inclined to expand his urbane reminiscences.

H. K. G.

GREEK CITIES IN ITALY AND SICILY, by David Randall-MacIver (Oxford University Press; pp. 226; plates 23, maps 5; \$3.75).

To those who are acquainted with the travel books of Mr. Randall-MacIver the author's name on a new book is sufficient justification for its purchase. This book in no way falls behind his previous work. Those who may have the good fortune to visit the ruins of Magna Graecia could not wish for a more accurate and readable guide; those who have not this luck may have the next best thing by reading the book. The illustrations are well chosen and excellently reproduced; the text not only gives all the interesting and relevant archeological detail, but a generous historical and mythological commentary, ranging from the first Greek settlements to the latest excavators, told in the easy, lucid style, and with the sustained interest that characterize his accounts of Etruscan and Pre-Roman Italy. It is a book that will be of equal value and interest to the specialist and the amateur.

This volume unites practically all that is known about the vanished Greek cities of Southern Italy, and the more considerable remains of Sicily. Syracuse, as is natural, gets much the fullest treatment; but even small towns of which little is known except their probable site, receive adequate consideration. His aesthetic judgments, even when they run counter to received opinion, are sane and well-based. The whole book has a freshness, competence, and enthusiasm which must surely communicate itself to even the most lackadaisical reader.

L. A. M.

BOOKS RECEIVED

The listing of a book in this column does not preclude a more extended notice in this or subsequent issues.

CANADIAN

THE STORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE, by Edmund Kemper Broadus (Macmillans in Canada; pp. xiii, 624; \$6.00).

THE AMIABLE TYRANNY OF PEISISTRATUS, by William Hardy Alexander (University of Alberta Press; pp. 20).

CATALOGUE OF PAMPHLETS IN THE PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF CANADA, prepared by Magdalen Casey (Public Archives of Canada; pp. 553; \$1.00).

OPEN HOUSE, edited by William Arthur Deacon and Wilfred Reeves (Graphic; pp. 319; \$3.00).

THE CANADIAN CATALOGUE, 1930. Compiled by The Public Library, Toronto.

GENERAL

TWELVE YEARS IN A MONASTERY, by Joseph McCabe (Watts & Co.; pp. ix, 259; 1/-).

SHIP WITHOUT SAILS, by Barbara Barclay Carter (Macmillans in Canada; pp. viii, 423; \$2.00).

THE ANATOMIST AND OTHER PLAYS, by James Bridie (Macmillans in Canada; pp. xvi, 183; \$2.50).

CYPRESS IN MOONLIGHT, by Agnes Mure Mackenzie (Macmillans in Canada; pp. 314; \$2.00).

THE END OF EXTERRITORIALITY IN CHINA, by Thomas F. Millard (A.B. C. Press; pp. 278).

COUNTRIES OF THE MIND, by J. Middleton Murry. First Series. (Oxford University Press; pp. vi, 192; \$2.50).

COUNTRIES OF THE MIND, by J. Middleton Murry. Second Series. (Ox-

ford University Press; pp. 205; \$2.50).

CHARLES READE, by Malcolm Elwin (Cape-Nelson; pp. 388; \$4.25).

LABOUR AGREEMENTS IN COAL MINES, by Louis Bloch (Russell Sage Foundation; pp. 513; \$2.00).

THE MESSIAH OF ISMIR, by Josef Kastein (Viking Press; pp. 346; \$3.50).

STUDENT'S MANUAL OF BIBLIOGRAPHY, by Arundell Esdaile (Allen & Unwin; pp. 383; \$3.75).

BACK FROM THE PLOUGH, by Ward Copley (Elkin Mathews & Marrot-Irwin & Gordon; pp. 298; 7/6).

MARIE LOUISE, by E. M. Oddie (Elkin Mathews & Marrot-Irwin & Gordon; pp. 371; 18/-).

THE Y.B.P. SERIES OF PLAYS, TWISTED SMILE, OUR FATHER AND OTHERS, edited by G. W. Bishop (H. F. W. Deane; pp. 20; 1/-).

VILLAGE DRAMA SOCIETY PLAYS, CROSS ROADS, YES! JOHN, AND OTHERS (H. F. W. Deane; pp. 20; 1/-).

A BOOK OF LONDON ENGLISH, edited by R. W. Chambers & Marjorie Daunt (Oxford University Press; pp. 395; \$5.00).

GUESTS OF THE NATION, by Frank O'Connor (Macmillans in Canada; pp. xi, 277; \$2.50).

BROOME STAGES, by Clemence Dane (Doubleday, Doran and Gundy; pp. viii, 703; \$3.00).

THE FATAL RIVER, by Frances Gai-ther (Henry Holt; pp. 303; \$3.00).

LAST AND FIRST MEN, by W. Olaf Stapleton (Cape-Nelson; pp. xvi, 371; \$2.50).

STRICT JOY. Poems, by James Stephens (Macmillans in Canada; pp. 57; \$1.75).

SHAKESPEARE'S WORKMANSHIP, by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch (Macmillans in Canada; pp. xiv, 309; \$1.75).

A CONSIDERATION OF THACKERAY, by George Saintsbury (Oxford University Press; pp. 273; \$2.50).

EDMUND BURKE, by Rev. Robert H. Murray (Oxford University Press; pp. viii, 423; \$5.00).

BAMPFYLDE-MOORE CAREW, edited by C. H. Wilkinson (Oxford University Press; pp. xxiii, 307; \$5.00).

PHILOSOPHIES OF BEAUTY, selected and edited by E. F. Carritt (Oxford University Press; pp. xxi, 334; \$5.00).

ECONOMIC ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES, by A. C. Pigou and Dennis H. Robertson (P. S. King-Irwin & Gordon; pp. vii, 215; 10/6).

THE Y.B.P. SERIES OF PLAYS, IDLE HANDS, THE ACTRESS AND OTHERS, edited by G. W. Bishop (H. F. W. Deane; pp. 20-35; 1/-).



THE TORONTO PRESS

The Editor, THE CANADIAN FORUM:
Sir:

The publication, in the current issue of THE CANADIAN FORUM, of the able and richly-merited exposure and analysis of the Toronto Press, lays the members of this society of fifty members under a debt of gratitude to the author.

A long suffering public that is obliged to turn to the Toronto morning press and the editorial lunatic paroxysms, alternately bolshephobic and beatitudinal—as regards Bennett, Baby Bessborough (3 columns, 3 editorials), The Prince of Wales as Saviour of Mankind, *vide* 'Two Saviours of Men' (Globe sermon-editorial comparing the former with the

Prince of Peace, etc., etc.)—must welcome such an article. *The Toronto Telegram* merits a special cell properly padded, if the trio of editors do not perish of mutual asphyxiation at last. Please convey our heartfelt thanks to the author.

Yours, etc.,

J. L. HARRIS, SEC'Y,
Barton Literary Society

Hamilton.

SPIRITUAL REALITIES

The Editor, THE CANADIAN FORUM:
Sir:

Having no desire to champion any claims made by delvers into psychic phenomena or to even sympathize with those who would defend metaphysical evidence, I am nevertheless opposed

to the conditions for proof of such things suggested by H. D. Kay in the article, 'Experimental Metaphysics.' It is the old but increasingly modern angle of the materialist insisting on physical proof of spiritual realities.

By spiritual realities I mean the realities of ideas. Realities which have been given visual and oral manifestation by say Chippendale and Beethoven. A reality which the materialist has attempted to snare by building up statistical relationships which seem to conform to the products of genius but which are valueless in attempts at duplication.

Are realities only those which can be examined under the microscope of the biologist? Is the only reality that which is conformable to the tabulations of a physicist? Does the present economic condition of things warrant confidence in the sense of reality evidenced by intelligent business men?

As Hillaire Belloc in his essay on Statistics said, 'The most important things cannot be measured.'

I have never had and have no desire for any contact with the type of spiritualistic phenomena apparently sought after by Sir Oliver Lodge. The so-called mediums and their staged environments may be the essence of fakery. But to suggest that manifestations of spiritual realities are only credible in so far as they may be concretely related to physical tabulation seems to me a narrow sense of values.

I find it difficult to conceive of any person or circumstance demonstrating the existence of realities other than materialistic, under the scrutiny of the group suggested by H. D. Kay.

Yours etc.,

ROBERT E. JOHNSTON

UNSATISFIED

The Editor, THE CANADIAN FORUM:
Sir:

(*This is not serious criticism. There is so much serious criticism.*)

I dreamt that Gabriel, seeing the world so glum,

Weary of waiting for the word to come,

Muted his dread trump to a merry hum,

And ushered in the gay millennium.

Then all Creation in a mighty ring
Stood for a space, mirthfully carolling.

All sang as one, all but one only thing:

For THE CANADIAN FORUM would not sing.

In mutual glee, through Heaven's broad expanse,
Here lions, lakes, and locomotives prance;

There planets, peers, and polygons advance

—But THE CANADIAN FORUM would not dance.

Down every echoing and applauding aisle

The chubby chuckling cherubs, mile on mile,

Turned hooped handsprings — vain was every wile.

No, THE CANADIAN FORUM would not smile.

Then timorously the merry clamour died;

Creation drooped to dust on every side.

Alas for Earth's, alas for Heaven's pride!

No, THE CANADIAN FORUM was not satisfied.

Yours, etc.,

L. A. MACKAY

THE YELLOW PERIL

The Editor, THE CANADIAN FORUM:
Sir:

It is apparent that the world, economic and political, is now endangered by The Yellow Peril, though in a very different form to the Occident-Orient holocaust predicted as our Armageddon by students of civilization. The Yellow Peril, which, born of the post-war period of prosperity, has only in the last few weeks become the household discussion of Mr. and Mrs. Everyman, is of metal not of blood.

Of all the suggested causes of our sorry plight and of the many remedies advanced by economists, both amateur and professional, Gold is the common factor. The world is suffering today from an aggravated sterilization of the basis of credit due to a remarkable and unprecedented situation where three-fifths of the world's

supply of gold is concentrated in the vaults of two countries whilst the remainder are in the direst necessity of this life-blood of commerce. It is indeed somewhat akin to the present position in the realms of Wheat. In China there are tens of millions of souls suffering the extremities of hunger whilst the granaries of Canada and the other wheat producing nations are overflowing because their contents cannot be sold. Supply exceeds Demand; but Necessity exceeds Supply.

The solution of the maldistribution of the gold supplies has become of paramount importance, for it is clear that until it is found there will be no return of national and international prosperity. Moreover, a solution must be found very soon if there is any truth in the words, spoken to a Montreal audience, of an eminent English economist, Professor Gregory, who placed a limit of one more year of present conditions before civilization reaches the breaking point of its economic system; and if serious political embarrassments engendered of a growing resentment by the man in the street, newly enlightened, against the two gold monopolizing nations are to be avoided. We venture to suggest that it might be very much in the interests of the United States and France to give an immediate lead in finding the solution, for it must be plain to most that the rest of the

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world is not in the mood to crucify themselves on a cross of gold in the vaults of these two countries. Self-preservation is no less a national than an individualistic trait and in the final analysis the world will take action to save itself even at the expense of renouncing its worship of the God of Gold for a new and better Diety.

England, after valiant efforts to remain, has been forced off the gold standard. The immediate effect of this would appear to be a quickening of the wheels of industry, to which has been applied some much needed lubrication in the form of lowered costs of production. It is altogether likely that other nations will follow her in releasing themselves from an impossible burden, and it is not difficult to predict a world-wide trend towards international deflation. The financial structure of the world is trembling in the balance, and unless that balance is adjusted by the only two nations which have the necessary weights of gold to apply, the gold standard is doomed. It is within the realms of possibility for England to make herself the centre of a new currency system to which the Empire and many suffering nations would gladly adhere. An international conference of the gold standard countries and England must be called at once if necessity is not to dictate economic revolution.

Yours, etc.,
F. P. LITCHFIELD

INFLATION

The Editor, THE CANADIAN FORUM:
Sir:

Suppose it be assumed, with Mr. Wilson as in his letter in the September issue of THE CANADIAN FORUM, that discrete inflation will do Canada no harm. There remains a quite different point to be proved. The point is, whether inflation will act primarily on, or will cause influence to be transmitted soon enough to consumers' purchasing power. Will inflation do any positive good?

Inflation will not increase the purchasing power of wage-earners; rather tend to diminish it, for a time at least, because of the 'lag' between prices of consumable goods and wages, which is especially long where labour is weak and unorganized as in Canada.

Nor will inflation increase the purchasing power of the salaried and 'rentier' classes.

Producers of primary commodities will gain nothing in the way of increased exports, of wheat and such, brought about by cheapening of Canadian money in terms of foreign—because wheat is already so low that 'price is no obstacle.' Australian producers do not seem to be benefitting much.

Entrepreneurs may indeed gain—decreased real costs, higher nominal rates of profit, more money to put into capital goods. But they will do just what we don't want, namely, accentuate the tendency to 'over-production.'

Mr. Keynes, to whom Mr. Wilson refers, speaks with reference to England, whose problem is really under-production,—under-production of the right goods at the right prices,—due to fossilized industrial organization and antideluvian business managers.

Under any circumstances, sound approach to monetary perfection, as Mr. Keynes shows in his two volumes of *Money*, is through adjustments much more subtle than simple changes in the amount of State-money. These are adjustments which can only be brought about by a Central Banking Institution. And I have the impression that Canada doesn't own such a thing.

Yours, etc.,
HOWE MARTYN

ROBERT OWEN FOUNDATION
*Appeal to Join in a Constructive
Effort Towards Better Days.*

The Editor, THE CANADIAN FORUM:
SIR:

A representative group of Canadians have formed recently the Robert Owen Foundation, with headquarters in Toronto, whose objects are to encourage and assist industrial and agricultural enterprises operated for the benefit and managed under the control of the working force, and in general to foster the development of a cooperative system of production and distribution in this country.

The initiators of this foundation invite all their fellow Canadians anxious for better days to join in this constructive effort. They believe that if this movement can take root throughout this country, it will help considerably in solving the present economic crisis, which, while it may be due immediately to a variety of causes, is due primarily, in their opinion, to a fundamental maladjustment in human affairs: a maladjustment which can be redressed only by the

voluntary cooperation of the people. They are convinced that the time has come, and is very urgently pressing upon us, when the 'law of the jungle,' which has been eliminated from most human relations but still rules to a large extent in the commercial and economic sphere, must be eliminated also from our business life; and must be eliminated through understanding, organization, and well-directed common efforts, if we want to avoid violence and disorder.

Attempts in the direction of the required readjustments have already been made in Canada by a number of enlightened industrial executives, who have developed more equitable and just relations with their employees; and most of these attempts have attained some measure of success. They may be considered as the forerunners of the present movement. But they all fall short of the goal, which must be the establishment of a system of industrial organization and democratic management capable of securing to all equal opportunities for full development.

Experiments in such fully cooperative methods of industrial organizations and government, already made in Canada and elsewhere, show that cooperative industries can be made very successful, more successful than the competitive concerns of the usual type. In this respect, we would like to refer to the achievements, not only of some agricultural industrial communities in the Canadian West, but also of the noted cooperative factory, The Columbia Conserve Company, Indianapolis, Indiana, and a number of workers' cooperative factories in England.

The members of the Foundation share actively in the belief that the average Canadian can be trained to become an efficient 'cooperator' in democratized industries; that he will derive joy from his work and find steady employment in such organizations, if they are conducted well; and that he will contribute far more to the welfare of himself and the rest of the community if he is made directly interested in, and responsible for, the outcome of the enterprise in which he is engaged, than he can under the present autocratic system. They wish to secure the adherence to this movement of all those who have a like belief in their fellow Canadians, and in the possibility of a readjustment of economic conditions in Canada through the voluntary, coordinated efforts of her people. They

also suggest that a contact be established between the Foundation and the numerous local movements already started in this country for the furtherance of the same ideal.

All persons interested are invited to send their names and addresses to the secretary of the Foundation, 259 Roxborough St. East, Toronto, Ont., who will gladly send further information.

PROF. H. LASSERRE,

Prov. Trustee.

SPENCER CLARK,

Secretary-Treas.

Toronto.

CANADIAN CENSORSHIP

The Editor, THE CANADIAN FORUM:
Sir:

On Sept. 8, 1931, the Montreal police raided a bookstore on Windsor Street, and after ransacking it thoroughly, carried off all the copies they could find of a book entitled *'Twelve Years in a Monastery.'* These were confiscated and destroyed as 'immoral,' but the owner has so far not been prosecuted. The book in question is No. 9 of the 'Thinkers' Library,' a series published by Watts & Co. of London. Apart from the high standing of the House, whose publications are known wherever the English language is spoken, those who are honoured to know the learned writer will realize how monstrous such a charge is. Mr. Joseph McCabe's works are characterized by a degree of moderation and restraint which is truly surprising in view of all he has gone through. If such writings are legally 'immoral' we have already reverted to the dark ages of our ancestors, when it was a crime to question any religious dogma however repulsive. There is a belief current that freedom of the Press is a constitutional right in the British Empire. Apparently this is not so, and any Canadian police official, even if imperfectly acquainted with the language, may, with impunity seize and destroy any English book with which he does not happen to agree.

Of course in a country where it is costly to contest official action, even if entirely illegal, such freedom as remains is a perquisite of the rich.

So much for the official censorship. We have also an unofficial one.

About midnight of Oct. 24 last, a band of students from Laval University raided the premises of *L'Université Ouvrière*, 85 Craig St., Montreal, a sort of French counterpart of the

Workers' Educational Association. Forcing the entrance they destroyed furniture, pictures, fittings, and piano utterly, and carried off the library, of which they made a bonfire in the streets adjacent. Their proceedings were watched by passive police. Claims for the damage done — about \$5,000—were repudiated alike by the University and City Council. It is understandable, though regrettable, that the former should hesitate to accept liability for all the wild exuberances of its students, poor testimony as they might bear to the train-

ing in religious and political tolerance they were supposed to be receiving. But that a self-respecting City Council should attempt to shuffle out of responsibility for failure to protect the property of its poorer class of citizens is despicable and a humiliation to Montreal. Meanwhile the U.O. struggles on minus piano or library.

Is there no Association in existence in Canada to curb the rude and reckless thing that passes for literary censorship amongst us?

Yours, etc.,

J. C. WILSON



NOTES ON THE EUROPEAN FILM

IN the course of a summer spent wandering in various European countries the writer managed to glean a certain number of impressions regarding the state of the movies in three nations. Roughly sorted into their geographical pigeon-holes these impressions are herewith reproduced.

Germany

The German movie world is in a state which Hollywood would surely regard as catastrophic, not only catastrophic but perverse. The box-office languishes and in spite of continued cuts in the prices of admission even the largest and most comfortable theatres found it impossible to secure even one full house during the past summer. Most of them did not even try and just managed to keep their heads above water by giving one nine to eleven performance in the late evening with possibly an earlier evening performance and a matinee on Sundays. Yet the German film, always a better-than-average product from the artistic and technical point-of-view, seems wilfully ignorant of the very word 'depression'. If the public wants talkies then the German studios produce good talkies and an abundance of them. Even their sound patents—such as *Tobis Klangfilm*—are streets ahead of anything that Western Electric has yet perfected. This may in part explain the complete acceptance of the talking film by the German movie-going public. German critics do not waste their time weeping crocodile's tears over the departed glories of the silent

film. That is a closed chapter and will remain closed as far as they are concerned.

As far as the subject-matter of the new German talkie is concerned, this past summer witnessed the production of a very distinct *genre* which, for want of a better name, one might dub the psychological crime film. The original inspiration may have been American, though anything more different from *Little Caesar* or *The Front Page* than *Voruntersuchung*, *'M'*, or *Kinder vor Gericht* could hardly be imagined. The American crime film deals almost entirely with the life and times of the gangster, it deals with externals and is almost pedantically historical. The German crime film sinks far deeper to a consideration of fundamental problems of justice, and links up in this way with much of contemporary German literature. The German exploration of the devious ways of justice is far the more honest of the two, and I am afraid these films could never be shown in Anglo-Saxon countries where people still place pathetic confidence in the integrity and intelligence of the police.

Incidentally the new German crime film stars an actor who is every inch the equal of the well-known Jannings. I refer to Alfred Bassermann, whom Germans consider even greater than the hero of *The Blue Angel*.

German film comedy seems to have gone back to the pre-war army and the unconsciously ludicrous Prussian officer for its main source of inspiration. This is interesting and has considerable political significance. Im-

gine the French, for instance, being funny at the expense of their military machine. As a matter of fact it is paradoxical even in Germany, for a serious war-film—though of foreign origin, it is true—*All Quiet on the Western Front*, was only shown for the first time this summer to carefully selected 'liberal' audiences. For comedy no such precautions need be taken and that delicious great gangling clown, Felix Bessart, spiked helmet and all, ambles his way through the farce of many films of the type of *Der Schrecken der Garnison*.

U.S.S.R.

The super-excellence of Soviet Russian films will not even bear discussion. They loom discouragingly far above all their competitors. *Potemkin*, *China Express*, *Storm Over Asia*, *Ten Days That Shook the World*, and *Turk-Sib* are so many mile-stones in the history of the cinema. So that it was with a proper feeling of awe that I took my seat in Moscow's finest movie-theatre to see the presentation of the first Russian talkie.

I was not disappointed. Even mechanically the new film was a surprise and a step forward. The new Russian sound process is as far superior to the *Ufa* patents in Germany as the latter are to their best American competitors. Speech is perfectly clear and without a trace of nasalization. Russian technicians seem even to have eliminated the distressing crescendo blare which is the average talkie's equivalent of radio static.

The film itself, *The Path to Life*, deals with the *bezprizorni* or homeless children who used to roam about the country in hordes during and immediately after the Civil War. The task of civilizing these unfortunate urchins was turned over to the Young Communists and the film is a moving dramatization of their efforts and success. Some real live *bezprizorni*, about the last left in Moscow, hung round near the exit and reaped a rich harvest from the moist-eyed audience who were naturally inclined to be generous after seeing such a harrowing film. One of the urchins must have had a keen business sense.

Like the Germans the Russians are taking the talkies seriously. I met a Russian acoustical expert on a boat going down the Volga who was travelling about the country supervising the construction of specially built halls, where the future sound films will be shown. This struck me as the logical, sensible, planned way of going

about the matter. Russians will not have to listen to talkies echoing distractingly in theatres built for quite another purpose.

While in the Soviet Union I managed to discover an elusive phenomenon whose existence I more than half suspected. After all, every Russian film could not be perfect and I wanted to find a really bad, moronic film, the sort one sees at one's favourite movie theatre at home about every other week. I found it at an evening showing in an open-air theatre in Rostov, and it was almost a relief. I forget what the thing was called, but it was inordinately long and packed with heroic improbabilities after the style of the good old-fashioned 'western.' The only difference was that there were 'white' brigands instead of red Indians in the role of villain and 'red' militiamen instead of Mounties. But in the one case as in the other, 'they always got their man. . .'

France

Should anyone be curious to know how bad the average run of contemporary French talkies can be, there is no need to cross the Atlantic to find out. In Montreal there is a specialized theatre, the *Cinéma de Paris*, which shows only the Made-in-France product. Sometimes it shows films that are not long drawn out, stagey, and technically a decade behind the times,—but not often. And the *Cinéma de Paris* gets a very representative collection of French films.

I found one film worth seeing after a month's assiduous search in Paris and that was Adolphe Menjou in *Mon Gosse de Père*. After all, one can see Menjou almost any day in a Hollywood product. Apart from that there is one firm which shows signs of promise, the *Films Osso*, which specializes in action films in which there is something approaching American

tempo. Among individual directors there is, of course, René Clair, begetter of *Sous les Toits de Paris*, a good but somewhat overrated production, and the more recent fantasy, *Le Million*. The rest is silence. No, not even silence, but the metallic squawkings of the high-pitched French voices of unsuccessful cast-offs from the Comédie Française, such as the insufferable Huguette ex-Duflos,—as she pleases to call herself.

One institution in the French movie world is worthy of unstinted approval, that is the unofficial and heroic *Ligue des C'est Idiots*. The French, being logical, have always maintained their right to disapprove as audibly as they approve. When a film is more than usually stupid and badly done they are getting into the habit of howling it off the screen. They have plenty to practice on.

ajax.

AN ACTOR LOOKS AT PIRANDELLO

I don't know if an actor's notes have any value for anyone not concerned with acting, but I recall examining in detail a great actor's study copy of Macbeth and finding written, down a margin and against a complicated set of notes on stress, movement and pace, one bold phrase: 'All very dark—this.'

THERE is one aspect of Pirandello which should endear him to the actor: to this most modern of dramatists all the world is a stage and all the men and women are really players.

That is part of Pirandello's philosophy; but it doesn't matter if the actor can't embrace the whole of it, for it is essentially bitter and it is arrived at only after viewing life as a deal of futile traffic. The good

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actor—and it is only the good actor who can play Pirandello—is much too mercurial and optimistic in constitution to subscribe to anything less than an old-fashioned philosophy—that of Shaw, shall I say, with its doctrines of creative evolution and of man as quite definitely the master of fate. The poor player, unable to see himself as such in life, cannot be expected to subscribe to every point of Pirandello's personal creed—particularly when that creed is not brightened by certitude or charged with any faith whatever. The actor, who is mildly shrewd, fears heresy because it may react unfavourably at the unenlightened box-office. What matters to him is that here comes an actor who deals apparently with normal human beings and who yet contrives plausibly to make them do what every born actor desires to do—assume successfully a disguise.

[What impels the actor to disguise himself and what the final effect of the operation may be are beside the point; the first is between the actor and his God (if any); the second is between the actor and his audience (if any).]

It is the gratification of his desire which is important to the dramatic artist, for he is essentially simple-minded, ruthlessly selfish, and unanalytic of his urge. His eyes are seeking the spotlights, his ears are alert for cues or laughs, and his brain is charged with lines. There is no room in him for a philosophy of desire or pre-occupation. He is unconscious of any mystery in himself. He is no walking shadow. How can he be when his egotism is part of his stock-in-trade? So why complicate things by suggesting that he is not what he thinks he is—off? His personal identity is his glory; it must remain as bright and serene as is his name outside the theatre (on direct, not alternating current).

He—a riddle of personality! No! He'll show them. For behind the mask and cloak is the actor. It is only a disguise (Ha! ha!). And whatever happens he remains a constant identity controlling the processes of his art. Oh, he himself exists positively, for it is through him that are revealed the truths behind the disguises. He is not mysterious; but give him space and light (placed—so!) and he will show you mystery through real walking shadows of his own creation.

It is of no moment to the actor that Pirandello through his shadows is leading the world away from the abso-

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lute and the positive, for the actor declines to see himself as part of a pattern of substance and shadow. Reason with him and he may listen to the suggestion that his desire for disguise is a simple weakness—a wish to escape not so much from the prison of a real world as from the fetters of self. He hadn't even looked at it that way before. Press him and he will finally round on you: 'My art an escape! Well, but is it not its own excuse? Do I not weep for Hecuba becomingly? Hamlet tells me what a mess he would make of the scene. And so would you! I give a good show because my motives and my cues to passion lie here' (indicating something below his toupée).

From Pirandello's point of view one would be right in using the word escape. But it is only to the actor (if he be an artist) and to Pirandello's characters that the desire to escape exists simply. To the former it is a passion, and as such it is incapable of analysis, and to the latter it is a longing so stirred up by the contrivance and accents of the dramatist's art as to become an obsession. This obsession as viewed by Pirandello in *Henry IV* is finally pitiable and ironic. Thus has it splendour.

I have for long thought that Henry IV is the greatest rôle in the modern theatre—prodigiously difficult, of course, and requiring the kind of mental *bravura* which a fine Hamlet must have.

As to the debt which we of the theatre owe to Pirandello, I grow more conscious of it every day. We of the English-speaking stage are not producing actors capable of sustaining

the great rôles of the new dramatist (he is to me the newest); I mean sustaining them with a power like that once brought by Granville Barker to a new Shaw, and by the company of London's Independent Theatre to a new Ibsen. Knowing well Miss Judith Anderson's performance in *As You Desire Me*, and feeling certain that there is no one in America who could give its equal, I wonder if there is an actor capable of playing Henry IV with similar magnificence. I wonder because the great Pirandello rôles require a supreme technical skill, great vocal variety and a knowledge of many playing idioms.

Let the Little and the Repertory theatres realize that graduates from the 'behaviour' schools of acting cannot play Pirandello. His characters have imaginative stature and their impulses come from the deepest energies of life. The works of Pirandello should have the serious attention of every young actor because in them he will find not only supremely exciting figures but, for the first time, dramatic forms for what have been mere abstractions.

My study copy of *Henry IV* lies open before me. I look at the end: BELCREDI: No, no, you're not mad! You're not mad!

HENRY IV (. . . terrified by the life of his own masquerade which has driven him to crime): Ah now . . . Yes now . . . inevitably (calling his valets around him) here together . . . here together . . . for ever . . . for ever.

I wonder what the great actor whose copy of *Macbeth* I studied would have written on this page.—Perhaps: 'All *Chiaroscuro*—this!'

HUGH MILLER

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